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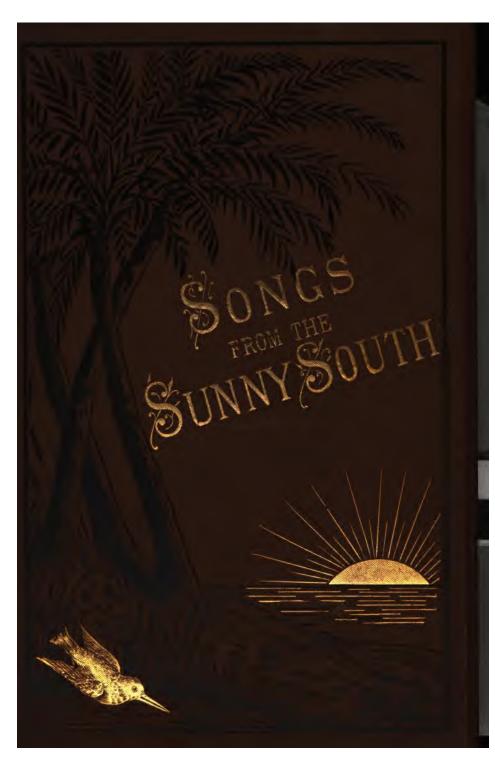
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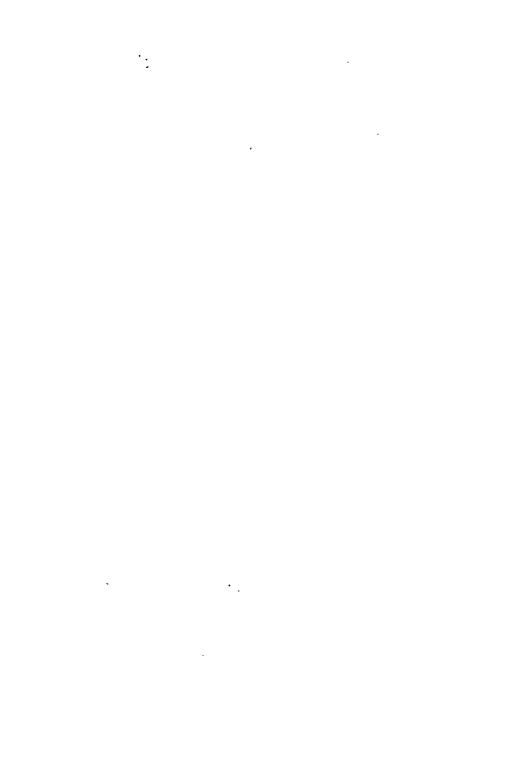
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SONGS

FROM

THE SUNNY SOUTH.

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SONGS

FROM

THE SUNNY SOUTH.

BY

JOHN CAMERON GRANT.



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то

My Mother

AND TO

THOSE DEAR LADIES

WHOSE LIVES

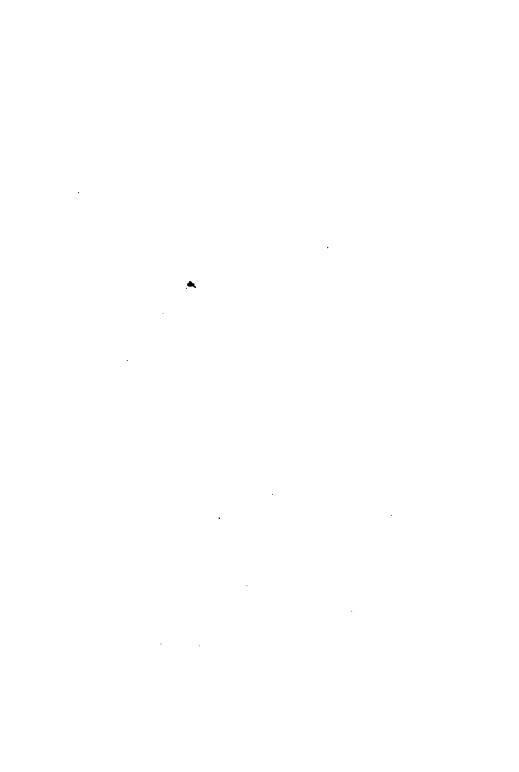
LIKE GUIDING STARS HAVE BEACONED THE BOY

THRO THE EVER SHIFTING LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF HIS

CHANGEFUL BEING.

		-	

UPWARDS AND ONWARDS-SO WITH ALL; THE BARS THAT SUNDERED INFANCY FROM YOUTH WITHDREW, AND FOR AWHILE I HAD NO GUIDE I KNEW; TILL, MOVING BLINDLY FORWARD AS I GREW, ONE AFTER ONE ACROSS THE CLOUDY DARK OF MY EXISTENCE YOU SWEPT AS SUDDEN STARS SHOOT OUT INTO THE DEEP BLUE OF THESE SKIES, AND WITH YOUR GENTLE POWER AND DELICATE FORCE YOU SET A STANDARD UP, A SIGN AND MARK TOWARD WHICH THE WANDERER MIGHT TRAIN HIS COURSE RENEATH THE TENDER GLANCING PITIFUL EYES OF SOUTHERN NIGHT: TO EVERY THOUGHT OF ILL, TO EVERY WISH OF EVIL WORKING WILL, YOUR FAIR LIVES PURE AND STRONG WERE AS REPLIES; AND WHEN MY SOUL HEARD DOUBTFULLY THE JARS OF WRANGLING CREEDS, IT TURNED UNTO THAT SOURCE THRO YOU MADE BOUNTIFUL, AND DRANK UNTIL IT FELT THE LOVE YOU SHOWED AND KNEW NOR CARE NOR CARK!



PREFACE.

It is an interesting period that in which the Boy gives way to Man, as the teens yield to the twenties, and there comes a restlessness, an Athenian rush for all new things, until sets in the reaction and the inevitable seeking back for the Past so hopefully deserted. It is this epoch, at one and the same time the term and the starting point of my life, that is upon the following pages fragmentarily transcribed. It may interest some to follow out in myself the perhaps feeble and shadowy reflection of their own earlier moments.

There is much perhaps in this Volume that may seem out of place in publicity, but it is difficult to make extracts quite alone and unassisted without at times unconsciously transgressing. It must be remembered that they are more portions of a journal of thought and inner life than distinct and individual pieces, and apparent contradiction only shows various phases thro which the changeful mind is ever passing.

The religious tone of some of these Poems may be objected to in a purely secular Volume, but to write in solitude as these verses were written is to write religiously. It would be almost impossible to escape the contagion of worship breathing thro Nature were there indeed any gain or object in that escape.

I have often wondered where Poems were written; in the Cloister, in the Study, or under the high blue dome of Heaven! For mine I can answer-on hill and highland, in deep jungle and on wide Patna, by river and Tank and Temple, by the sea, upon the shore, and when the storm winds were sweeping the mountains, and the thunder buffeting the peaks that have stood the same buffets since the world was young. If what I have written breathes not of the places in which it came to birth, it is no fault of omission but greatly one of commission, that I should be such a block as to feel and feed upon the fair, the terrible, the gentle and the strong, and all the forces of things that are and yet to speak but as a soulless brazen bell, still having the conceit to ring out my discordant notes upon a single fellow-creature. Nay, I hope I have a little at least of my sorrow, my sympathy, my worship for the All-Mother inset upon these pages. I believe I have or I would never have thought of letting others view them.

Contemporary Poetry! Ah me, contemporary with the month of issue only or with all years! One should not, does not, cannot write with thought such as this in mind, but now as I am about to part with so many secrets, the wonder will not but rise, is there ought worthy to live in so much that is scarce worthy the boon of peaceful Death?

SOUTHERN INDIA, 18th April, 1880.

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SONGS FROM THE SUNNY SOUTH.

PERSONAL.

BECAUSE I felt the world was young
And fresh, and strong its pulses beat;
Because the grass beneath my feet,
Tho centuries old, was new and green;
Because the birds made glad the scene
With songs that a thousand years had been
Swelling their throats to music sweet,
My heart leaped up in me; I sung.

I felt that I, while standing there, In all their pleasure had a share; I knew their troubles, drank their joy; Their secrets saw, their little strife; I could not pass a sullen life Apart, and hear them, and not give My whole heart out, that I might live Their happiness, with the alloy That sorrow mingles in the songs Of Singers true, to whom belongs A double life of pain and joy; That keener instinct than in throngs Of harsher souls is found. I knew. As music thrilled me thro and thro. That, if I answered to the thrill, An inner life should rule my will; That all this life's successes short, A vain attempt it were to court; That every one a Poet born Must wear a crown—a crown of thorn; Must trample on things worldly great, And live the plaything of a fate Capricious, cruel, sad; and yet No tender blue-eyed violet Looks softer on the sunset sky, More lovingly, compassionately, Than Earth upon her child Who flings himself upon her breast, And seeks what life can not give-rest From Being, and thoughts that lie Round him in ambush wild.

Felt I thus in that early time
When childhood trembled into youth,
When spring passed into summer prime,
And painted with her glorious lights

Things brighter than the truth;
And like the days of old forsooth,
The days were all Arabian nights.
Ah, me! I breathed another air
From that we breathe upon the earth,
When passion, sorrow, cark, and care,
That watch us from our very birth
Until the power is given to spring
Upon us, and, with vice-like grip,
The very soul within us wring,
Till heavy bead-drops ooze and drip
From off our brows, sprang on me then,
And made me daily more of men.

I left the olden glory-time Of childhood, and my life's young prime-I left it; but it follows me, Tho dimly seen, and heavily Thick mists about it hang and hide The springs of glory that inside Yet murmur of delights long past, Until the hearing of them casts Such power upon my eyes, I gain Strange strength to see them once again. Straight from my lower mood I rise, To claim the tender sympathies Of river, rock, and whispering tree, That seem to keep their speech for me. 'Tis thy voice, Nature, that I hear, As darkness cloaks the evening clear: Thou sing'st their soft last lullaby, When floating foambells fade and die;

The great cliffs, riven, and scared, and cracked By thunder of the cataract, Give back thy voice; 'tis thou alone Recall'st once more those sweet days flown.

I know my verse is poor and weak;
I know I lack the power to speak;
Yet, stammering speech altho it be,
I speak it, for my heart hath cast
Its clinging arms around the past,
Like tendrils round some Titan tree;
And there are others fond as me,
Who love to backwards lean, and look
Into the morning of their prime,
When first their wayward spirit took
Its flight into all time.

I know there Poets round me are
Who rise as giants in their might,
Who burn like suns in glorious light.
I would be like the evening star,
And look back on the daylight past;
A taper thro the night, and cast
A gentle ray into the heart
Of some lone watcher, as he stands
Away from friends in distant lands,
And hears the cry of the night-jar,
And dreams on times now coming fast,
When they shall meet no more to part.

I would be like the creeping tides, And slip into the hearts of men, Flooding their souls with gentleness, As a sea-maid's mystic song, A quiet tide, but very strong, That peacefully and calmly glides Like that which washes far Westness, When every breeze is hushed to sleep, And a low whispering from the deep Calls out the stars agen.

Or I would twine about their hearts
As tendrils of the passion-vine
Clasping some rugged pillar, twine;
Would grow around them till they knew
Not what they felt or from me drew;
I would support the weak; the strong
Would bear me in their strength along,
And those that loved a Poet's parts
Would love me for my love of song.

To men I'd be a comforter, Showing their sorrows in my own, And some compassion from them win In failure and in sin, And in that bitterest distress, The falsehood of a false success, Fortune, and all that follows her, If not spent rightly for the good Of fellow man and humanhood.

I'd be to brother boys like me
A knowledge how that boyhood grows—
Its ever striving up to be

Above the thing it is; its woes
And griefs and bitter overthrows;
Its turning to the other fair,
More angel sex to seek
And find its high ideal there,
When all around seems cold and bleak;
The daily growing more and more
Of the most mystic meaning, wife;
Adam's lost Eve found, so to speak,
United for a fairer shore
And a more perfect life.

A SOUTHERN PORT.

Away at sea a line of curling foam,
Crested and crimsoned with the morning sun,
Beyond the hollows, heaving one by one
Their bosoms swelling to waves that rise and roam
Restless awhile at sea, then steady growing,
From great to greater march along with even flowing.

'Twixt the two Points the armies of the ocean Advance to the attack, and as they come, Like a tired warrior, the long coast is dumb Awaiting the onset, nor sound nor motion Makes 'gainst the challenge that its foeman launches, Save of winds wandering thro the cocoanut branches.

Then gathered for the spring, along the line Runs a low "Ready now," but all in vain Wave beats the solid sand and sinks again, Anew to rise, re-strengthened from the brine:—
The crash of combat, then a still, once more The strong surge throws its thunders on the shore!

ON THE BACK-WATER.

The warm wind from the sea
Played thro the grasses, bells, and water-blooms,
And made a delicate music of its own;
Moving across the shallows lazily,
A lazy shuttle threading the green looms,
The long Dug-out slipped on thro the lagoon,
From sunny spots to where the shadows thrown
Made a cool shelter from the king of noon.

All is so beautiful-

The mimic mangroves on the bank, the pines
Bending beneath their gorgeous, useless fruit;
The leafy caves beneath, so green and cool,
Where crickets hold their court; the lizard shines
In that one ray of sunlight which comes thro,
And lifts his clean head from the knotted root
To mark the fly upon that creeper blue.

.)

The hawk-moth hovering,
A self-supported jewel in the air—
Inconstant opal—flits and flies away,
As from the tall palmyra ring, ring, ring,

The bell-bird breaks the silence fallen there
With keen, clear call a moment, and is still;
His challenge straight is answered—a blue jay
Girdes out his harsh hoarse notes with clamorous
bill.

The sapphire kingfisher,

'Neath the chibook-built bridge, a brilliant bright,

Watches the waters in a wakeful rest;

But as the sluggish pole-plash startles her,

Shoots o'er the shallows, like an aeriolite

O'er the blue heavens above, with glittering course,

Dipping and rising till she makes her nest

Hidden somewhere by that old fountain source.

At rest beneath the palms—

The still of mid-day steals up over all,

The lazy waves scarce ripple on the sands;

Look o'er the weather-side where the boat calms

The water quiet; how they creep and crawl,

Or float and swim, and fight for biscuit crumbs!

A whole lake-nation—fins, and tails, and hands,

Craw-fish, and clawing crabs, and miller's-thumbs.

Throw in that scarce picked bone—
A chicken's leg once: how they swim and strive,
While the half-foot-long-nosed skirmishers keep out,
And forage round the battle by that stone.
Bless me! the very water seems alive
With fish that tug, but won't give back an inch;
Vain, gallant strife; the crabs put them to rout,

For mouths that pull cannot match claws that pinch!

Once more along our way—
See to the left a low white bar of sand,
On which the tearing, raging breakers break,
In the vain effort to burst in and slay
The quiet water 'twixt them and the land,
That smiles serene in brilliant broidery,
And spreads her charms out 'neath the sun, to take
And tempt the hopeless hunger of the sea.

Like Venus' rosy lips,

The pure pink lotuses pant for the sun
That lights the diamond drops upon their leaves;
Tossed by the wind, each sparkling droplet slips
Back to its native wave, as one by one
The goddess wrung the sea-sprays from her hair,
In rainbow light that myriad colour weaves,
While all things glowed before her presence there.

What kingly palaces

Have columns like the palm-trees towering high?
What floor of art is like the shelly strand?
What music like the music of the seas?
What roof of fairy delicate tracery,
What play of fountains, like the sunny beams
That come and go returning hand in hand,
As the bright forms we only see in dreams?

The fairest of the fair,

The tall areca waves her feathery leaves,

And fans herself, as the palmyra strong

And lordly cocoa-nut, her lovers there,

Whisper and ogle; and the sago grieves
His forlorn state and stature; and the date
And wilder comrade stand apart and long
Their hopeless suit, but feel they are too late.

Thro the tough tamarind

A school of parroquets seems out on treat,
And shriek and scream and chatter, wild with glee;
And to the branches tossed up in the wind
Cling, back-down, closely with their bills and feet,
Forcing the bulbul, who a moment sung,
To cease his rippling rain of melody,
Out-bawled and beaten by sheer strength of tongue.

The sweet sedge-warblers,

And small birds from the bushes all about,

Take up the cause of song, and their true heart

Pours forth its passionate piping: as the wind stirs

Their long purse nests, the weavers all come out,

And have an afternoon among the boughs;

While round the tree trunks the blue land-crabs dart,

Or watch their neighbours, each from his own house.

The merry sister birds

Grow tired of playing, and so cease their play, Save when some pert young cackler censure braves, And raises for awhile a storm of words.

Noon scarce seems past; tho all is happy day, Gilding its gorgeous path with lavish hand The lazy sphere lolls o'er the western waves, And silence settles down along the land. His Spirit fills the place—
You feel as if all things before Him kneeled
In prayer beneath their Maker's very eyes;
The waters all are stilled before His face,
The sorrow of the sea is almost healed;
By the soft winds His love is blown abroad,
And, like a blessing, on all earth's beauty lies
The golden sunlight summer smile of God.

SUNRISE.

In the dewy dawn of the daylight,

Ere the sleepy flowers had awakened or opened their eyes,

I passed down the path where the feathery ferns hung fay-light,

And under the high arched trees where the last of the night yet lingering lies.

And sweet on my fevered brow was the breath of the morning,

As the sun came over the sea and rested awhile ere he braced him to breast the hill;

His coming I knew, for his feathery herald rang out his warning,

While the bronze on the waters changed to a lighter gold, and then to the silver that steeps them still.

I flung myself on the grass, and I heard it whisper,

"We have rested and drunk of dew, and are fresh and strong for the joy of another day;"

And the clouds that were fleecy and soft grew curled and crisper,

As a wind swam up from the silent south, like the sigh of a soul, and swept them away.

Then swift where the Western halls invite her

Fled the vanquished Circe, night, by this greater and newer Ulysses o'erborne;

While proud in his glory, and glowing and broader and brighter,

The higher he climbed to all homage grew the gold. armoured Morn.

Breaking the subtle iron chain of the sleeper,

The poor old earth that lay as dead while the night ruled haughty on high;

Springing from cliff to cliff, from forest to forest, from creeper to creeper,

Till mountain and valley awoke and were glad as the sun, like a god, rode over the sky.

IN THE JUNGLE.

I sroop beneath the giant trees
That stretched their brawny arms on high,
Like Titans wakened out of sleep
By soft, warm kisses from the sky.

No heavy undergrowth was there,
No canes nor palms, like feathery sheaves;
As nature left her, fresh and bare,
Clothed only by the fallen leaves

The old young earth lay half asleep, As I, Acteon-like, did gaze; Almost in fear to find her there, Still living in these latter days.

An Eve, who her first knowledge gained
Of man, and man's companion, sin;
My presence sole made desecrate
The purity that breathed within,

Beneath, above, and all around,
For I was first to wander there;
The first to tread that hallowed ground,
The first to breathe that virgin air.

Morning was dewy yet, and all
Was stillness, save where now and then
Upon the listening ear would fall
The distant sounds of far-off men.

It seemed as tho another world
Rose round me since I'd passed the plain,
And all the busy scene late left
Was Acting acted out in vain.

I felt I'd turned another page, Unread, unwritten, but for me; And passed into some primal age, Leaving the nineteenth century,

With all its rush and crush and roar,
I doubt not working out for good;
But oh, the change to peace and rest
In that calm forest solitude!

THE COMING OF THE MONSOON.

Like the low moaning of far sobbing seas,

Heard when the daylight dies along the shore
Of Westray and of Rousa, wails the breeze;
Then falls away, and all the heavy-eyed trees

Quiver and answer to some unseen power
That trembles thro their leaves, and stirs them to the core.

And what are these tired voices in the air

That fill me with their weariness and drowse?

All longings in one great longing for the fair,

Far Northern home; the dear days gathered there,

Like flowers from some oasis in life's plain,

Bound a bright coronal about my brows!

There is one low and plaintive cry from hill
Rock, river, bird, and insect, thro and thro;
All hearts there feel the same strange longing still,
That speaks as Nature best may speak her will
With every myriad ready tongue she hath,
From her shells' whisper to the wide skies blue.

A few large tears drop heavy to the ground, As the the clouds grieved in their sultry sleep To watch the leaden earth; still is each sound That late rung music out to all around;
And the clouds, wakened by that silence strange,
Roam wildly round and wring their hands and weep.

But now their tears are spent, and silence dies
Again in mournful music, and a low,
Sad strain runs thro it, like the thought that lies
In dreams, desires, and distant memories—
That has not words, for it cannot be said—
The trembling grasses bow them to and fro.

Louder the wind wails thro the forest trees;

The leaves find tongues for sorrow and for prayer
That the long longed for fail not; on her knees,
Nature takes up their longing; her voice, the breeze,
Calls thro the wide of heaven; the one-willed cry
Fills all the space above, beneath, and everywhere.

The half-dead earth throbs wildly; thro its veins
Flows with fresh leaping life the blood that late
Was cold and chill; its valleys, mountains, plains,
Tremble to the new hope; the gentle rains,
In forecast of the bounty that is near,
Whisper, "A little wait—a little wait."

Answered, O panting earth, thy prayer is heard,
And every cry but this the forest dumbs;
In chirp of insect and in trill of bird,
Nought is there but the eager, happy word
Blown by the wind from hill to higher hill,
The time is drawing near; it comes, it comes!

FEVERED.

Hor, hot! the air is heavy, and her hand Has Fever laid upon me; wearily, As longs some sailor for the sight of land, I hunger for the breezes of the sea.

And thro the night, the long, long night of pain,
There was no dreamful still or rest or peace;
So long, it seemed morn ne'er would come again,
And darkness had its sounds that would not cease

'Till came the day anew with other cries,
Save in that deathful drowsy hour of noon,
When all is stilled, as the a sere-cloth lies
Over a dead land hushed before the Simoon.

Again the Fever; now 'tis past, and I,
With brain fired out, lie like a tired child;
I would have sleep—but sleep can draw not nigh,
And I—O mother, as of old you smiled,—

Only a dream—I doze and wake again,
And dream, and call on faces that I see,
And stretch my arms in fancy, and in vain,
To shadowy forms that faint and shadowy flee.

O for some quiet sea-shore, where the sea,
With low soft plainings so could breathe my life
Out of its self, that I could leave this me
As a forgotten thing, cast with the strife

The trouble and the toil of man away
Before the sunset glories of that death
Which rises into a new life and day,
Bound not in flesh, dependent on no breath,

That comes and goes at random as it were—
Sweet sleep, if for a moment I might be
Drowsed in an odorous dream of musk and myrrh
In the calm gardens of eternity!

O for some quiet rest, where myriad sound Could break not on my sleep! The life that lives in all the green world round, Where creepers downward sweep

To droop their heavy clusters, snake-like wreathed, And shed their sickly sweets; O could I breathe the air that Shelley breathed, Or lie at rest by Keats!

THE MOON-FLOWER.

DEAR flower of Dian, thro the night
A star upon the earth's broad breast,
You caught your sun's reflected light,
And followed him from East to West:
I caught your smile on lips and leaves,
As Adam when he first saw Eve's.

Dear Dian's flower, Astarte's bloom

Must blush beneath the burning sun;

Grown heavy with her hot perfume,

Love-drunk and drowsed, any one

May fold her in his arms, but you

Love one alone, and love him true.

Dian's dear flower, thy sweetness spent,

Thy petals fall and thou art dead;

Nay, gone to gain what thou hast lent—

Morn's shafts shoot all the East with red:—

O Flower, that I might die away

Like thee from dull and deathful day!

OLD SEAS AND NEW.

THE surf is the same as it used to be,
And the Palms are the Palms that my childhood had,
But there's something new in the face of the sea,
And the wind thro the feathery sheaves
Of the sensitive whispering leaves
Goes sad, not glad.

The sea lays its face on the shore,

And tenderly, lovingly winds its arms round the bay;
Tho its breast heave pitiful as before,

In a sadder strain is the song it sings,

And hushed are its olden whisperings,

Or passed away.

There is never a sea-maid now,
When the tide is out and the low swell moans,
To spring like a wave from the depths below,
And sit by me, with her small white feet,
On the yellow sand, her chin on one hand,
While the other lay on my knee in mine,
As our fingers caressing would intertwine,
And her eyes—those seas of the sapphire blue—
Looking me, reading me thro and thro;
With at times her silvery tones,

Soft as the falling of soft dew is, Soft as the ocean's softest kiss, Killing me, thrilling me thro and thro.

For she was the queen of all below, While I was the king of all above; And hand in hand together we'd go, Now thro the seas that before her move. Leaving a space for us to be— O the beautiful, lovable sea! With me she'd wander till twilight grey Stole on the depths of the deep; far down We heard the whirlpool roaring away, And saw the rock and the golden crown, And the Diver where he lay. Then hand in hand we'd turn again And make for the shore of the sea-Sweet, and a-many a parting had we Ere she turned and slipped down the main, And set as an evening sun on her kingdom, the sea, On the morrow to come again, To return to her king again. Short hours: O then, when the tide was out She came again, my queen of the sea-The seas were proud to call her queen, And the waves, her slaves, played round about In their liveries of green; And she'd leave her slaves of the sapphire sea, Tho queen of them all and queen of me; And, cheek on cheek, arm locked in arm, Ere the morning dew was dry on the wold,

Ere the sun had opened his eyes of gold, We passed to the moorland, quiet and still, In the dawn of the daylight, dewy and calm; And onward thence together we'd pass Thro my emerald seas of the downland grass, Leaving the heather that heaved on the hill For a mossy vale and a tinkling rill, Where roses blushed that the morn had kissed. Leaving a pearl for each kiss he took, And lilies nodded across the brook. And looked at themselves, with their eyes of gold, In the water and then at us over the wold. And all was the silence that sings with joy. Till the osiers whispered softly, "Whist! They are near, they are coming, they cross the stream, And tho king and queen o'er all they may seem, Each is to each now but girl and boy!" "Here," breathed the Birch-tree, "linger here; Here is a mossy seat." And I trembled into her coral ear. "Shall we go further, Sweet?" And she whispered back, but I heard it not; I only heard the wild winds blow, And we were resting upon that spot, With a bubbling spring below That laughed away from our feet. At times I yet hear it laughing low, As it laughed away from our feet that day. Then, soft as a bride may say, "I will," The wind threw her tresses across my breast, But the head on my shoulder never stirred,

The her heart beat hard as a fluttering bird,
Her tresses they lay there still.—
Silence, silence around,
And we too happy to speak;
But we thought each other's thought—thought found
A way from heart to heart,
And told us all when the hour came to part
In the twilight grey and meek.

Now the tide is out, and the low swell moans
'Til sound dies over the sea,
Save for the half heard monotones,
As the waves repeat it o'er and o'er—
"No more, no more, no more,
Will she ever come back to thee!"

CYPRIS.

The hedges meet across the walks,

The gravelled walks o'erlaid to sleep
Beneath a counterpane of grass;

The shut-eyed owlets from the forks

Of silent tree-stems seem to keep
A slumbrous watching o'er the glass

Of waters, where the willows weep,

And sleepy shadows softly pass.

No shake nor stir from all around,

There is no single bee to hum,

No gnat nor fly to shrill the air;

But ceaseless still of summer sound,

Unbroken by the go or come

Of small lives hurrying here and there;

No woodpeckers the trees to drum,

The song of silence everywhere.

The marble gods about the bank
Step half into the water down,
And stand as chilled from life to death;
As the from that wild plunge they shrank,
And died into a death-like swoun—
A being of neither death nor breath,
Like that that knows not smile nor frown,
Which dawn from daylight sundereth.

But one form stood erect, and drew
My whole soul from me to her lips,
And bound it with her hair; her eyes
Were passion-parted; from their blue
Strange fires shot out, as lightning slips
From star to star and lights the skies;
It drew my soul to its eclipse,
Borne on a dream of softest sighs

Long heard and long remembered; lost
In the long dead of long ago,
Far off in my young diamond East,
Ere I had learnt the count and cost
Of what Love was, and what might flow
From slightest currents that increased,
Even as mighty rivers grow
From sources that are looked on least.

I gazed again, and only saw

The stony marble in her place;
And all the vision fair had fled,
And all the thoughts that were before
Had paled from off her pallid face,
And now were numbered with the dead;
"I have no thought at all, or grace
To face my thoughts," my Spirit said:

And turned him sadly from the scene
Where once he was a worshipper,
And bowed him humbly to the earth;
Alas! for all things that have been;

Alas! for all of me and her;
Alas! for all things that my birth
Has caught into itself: defer
You can, but cannot fill the dearth.

Ah, woe! ah, bitter woe! that Love
Should so spring forth and tangle me
In the bright meshes that he weaves!
That passion from beneath should move
My heart so over bitterly!—
The sunshine dancing on the leaves
Turns back my thought at once to thee
Whose smile is wicked or deceives.

Caught in the tangles of Love's hair;
Caught in that wilderness, and thou
Hast chained me, claimed me, made me thine;
My struggles thrust me deeper there;
Each thought recalls some wild thought how
You bought me with a look, said mine;
There is a look you know I trow,
We feel but cannot more define.

Eye answers eye; it doth suffice;
I tremble at the words I write,
It was not I, it was not I,
I wakened from a Paradise
To find I stumbled thro a night
With not a single star on high;
You led me further from the light,
You led me to yourself to die.

Ah! bitter-sweet, upon my lips
Your lips were sweet; you strongly drew
My soul to yours; in vain, in vain
I struggled, for resistance slips
Away like sand 'gainst foe like you;
Now the old fires burn up again,
Thine eyes consume me thro and thro,
Soft eyes, yet O to me the pain!

Thy hand was on my hand to keep

My hand for ever bound to thee;

Ah! wherefore didst thou choose me then,

And lull me into dreamful sleep,

And let thy soft breath breathe on me—

On me a boy, who might have men,

And had them who thy slaves would be,

To turn from them to me agen?

And I, ah! wherefore did I cast
Myself before thy triumph car,
And win thy smile of all the rest?
Forgetful of the faerie past
And others fairer than you are,
To dream away upon thy breast
From the pure influence of that star
Still shining steady from the West.

Alas! alas! that Love were sin!

How new, yet old to me the cry!

Why from my dream did I awake?

Better for me that looking in

Thy sweet blue dewy depths of eye
My soul were drowned as in a lake,
Sucked down to death in extacy,
With nought the dream to bound or break.

The tears rise to my lids, and thro
My hot cheek flames the burning blood
As thy hot heart beats next to mine,
And thy hot lips are on me, new
From memories old and understood,
As earth was mixed with the divine,
As in a wild and wondrous wood
Of lights and shadows we did twine

Our two beings into one, and drank
From out a common cup of joy,
Free lifted to their lips unbought;
And, if the wine was strong and rank,
How could they blame a girl and boy
Who knew not better than the thought
That nature gave them without cloy,
And deeply lessoned them and taught?

Thou wert not cruel, Love, but kind,
And I was cruel not to spring
Straight to thy side when called by thee.
As the leaves tremble to the wind
That thrills the heart of everything,
So thrilled thy silver voice thro me;
I was more cold than snows awing,
And deafer than the senseless sea.

But the snows melt on earth's warm breast,
The seas sigh back unto the shore
And kiss the soft sands passionate:
Altho we early leave the nest,
Our hearts fly ever backwards o'er
The present, tho returning late
To seek the spot they see no more,
Their first, their spirit's sweetest state.

Ah, Love! ah, Love! what have I writ?

Thy hand must write the which I write,
And speak my heart as thou would'st speak.

Thy heart! mine does not answer it,
Altho thy fair face shines with light,
And thou art strong as I am weak,
Thy heart is blacker than the night,
And bitterer than the sea and bleak.

What follows after, in the space

Where thoughts are known but hidden still,

Tho shifting as the shelly sands:—

Woman in heart and girl in face,

You moulded me unto your will;

I but a boy was in your hands,

But there was that you could not kill,

Heart-held in other lands.

SEA AND SOUL.

My soul within me like the tired sea

Must surge up ever, altho it long for rest

And beat against the shores that round it be,

And follow the glad Sun from East to West,

Until it ceaseth to have strength to follow,

And wails its hopelessness among the caverns hollow.

At times it flings upon the strand some shell
From its dark depths, and smiles the fair form seeing;
Its Parent's whisper in the child will dwell
Altho it leave him, upwards swiftly fleeing,
To pass away and to be seen no more
Along the barren sea-sand and the shore.

"Alone, alone;" so ever it sighs to me—
"As I am thou must live, and vain thy quest;
As I toss on my bed eternally
So thou eternally in wild unrest
Pursuest a Daphne, like some dream-seen swallow,
Lost, ever lost to a more sad Apollo."

And oft thou sayest, "Cease, for all is well;
Take courage, heart, and rest thy wild self-freeing
From clouds that cloak and surges that up-swell
To whelm the island of your present being;"
But a sad whisper swims down slowly o'er
The stretches of the sea, to sigh out nevermore.

A HEART'S TRAGEDY.

First Sight.

Among all others I picked her out,
Picked her out that beautiful night,
Among all others the first my sight
Rested or cared to rest on there,
There was more in her than in others about
That replied to my heart's cry, "Where?"

And she met my eyes with an answering look,
"I should know you, you that I see," it said;
And she turned again her masculine head
And strove in the game they were playing then.
I read in that glance as one reads a book,
"Boy, I must win you as I've won men."

I turned away from the scene with a laugh,
A laugh laughed low to myself alone,
Keep to yourself what yourself hath known

Till it pass from your thoughts like the breath of the breeze.

My hostess said, "You have seen but half; Look here at these lovely trees!

"Come down the centre path and see
If the pinks have suffered by last night's frost:
Where are your eyes, they seem to be lost
For all our beauties of bell and flower?"
I said, "I am dull, as is wont with me,"
But O what a tedious hour!

"Yes, 'tis a lovely Datura plant."

"Datura! why, 'tis a Tiger-lily!

I never found you before so silly;

What is the matter with you to-night?

Cold? ah, yes, it is cold I grant,

And the wind is beginning to bite.

"We had better go back, it is bleak out here
But warmer among the trees,
Their game is over I think." "Yes please
Let us go!" "Shall I get you a cup of tea?"
"Do! and my shawl it is lying there,
Bring it with you back to me."

I went, and when I again returned
Somebody stood by her chair
Somehow or other I feared her there:—
"You should be old friends," my Hostess said,
And a face searched mine with eyes that burned,
And cheeks with a touch of red.

The Meeting.

Our hands were clasped, and thro our souls did pass
As the soft sunlight thro stilled water tends,
A vague wild feeling, till as in a glass
We seemed to see each other's thoughts and ends
And track them down thro all their devious bends,
To cry it might have been, alas, alas!

Then my soul strove to spread its vanes for flight
From that enchanted ground and danger dread,
But like a wearied bird it could not fight
Against itself, its wings grew heavy and dead,
Till on her breast it seemed to bow its head
Lulled by the words, drink deeply of delight.

And soft wings fanned it into sleep, it lay
As one that on a bed of violets lies
Thro all the hot noon of a summer's day
Drinking in odours, and the silver cries
Of each sweet songbird that about him flies,
And dreaming life in extacy away.

No thought, or thought for thought, but only joy,
Such as the scented autumn summer-sweet
Wafts seaward, as to one tossing in the hoy,—
—The low land shoots his arms across to meet
And clasp against his breast the bay,—comes fleet
And clear the happy laugh of girl and boy.

The Greeting.

The common words of greeting fell
Upon my ears returned by me,
But O how changed from those they tell
From lips that we hear constantly.
Water is water everywhere,
But O how more to him, who sunk
Upon the sand lies dying there,
Till saved by what he late hath drunk,
That some blest Traveller passing by
Hath bid him rise and share.

Not water drank I in but wine,

A wild new wine that sparkled bright;
It gilded fears and seemed to shine

A very fountain of delight:—
Who would not stoop to drink, the cup

Held to my lips was running o'er,
The perfume to my soul rose up,

I deeply drank and sought for more,
But for that draught the world was night
And life a sullen shore.

Old Memories.

A touch, a word, it was over, We had known each other for years, A far off season of clover Remembered in this one of tears,
Brought back like a breeze from the times that were
dead
And whispered into our ears.

In an instant more than another

Each grew to each, and the Past

Joined our hands, was't of sister and brother

The feeling it over us cast,

The attraction that singled us out from the rest.—

"They have met," the winds murmured at last.

Was it more, then I thought not, a vista

Lay behind us and stretching away,
In the dim colonnades 'twas a Sister

I saw, and a Brother at play,
Till a mist hid the Forms that appeared; they are shyer

These two, when they meet here to-day.

"You're the same, tho you're growing a man, Sir, I knew you the moment I saw."

"And you,"—Here I stopped in my answer—

"I've heard all that mentioned before;"

She quickly replied and looked into my eyes—

"I've heard all that nonsense and more."

We wandered apart, it was growing

More twilight, the evening was red

To the westward, the crisp clouds were showing

The sleepy Sun down to his bed.
We talked of old times till she blushed looking down,
"Since you left I've been married," she said.

Then quick scanned my face as together
We seemed to draw closely, apart
Next instant we stood there, and whether
'Twas only a dream of the heart,
Or a thing that had been and was over
I know not, so sudden the start.

But a bar had been broken between us
As silent we stood there and still
Watching the witch-fire of Venus
That shimmered and spread on the hill,
And drew to each other with never a word
But a sudden swift stroke of the will.

The Moon drew the earth to her bosom,

They rose to her hills and trees,

The Moth was blown to the blossom

Borne on the breath of the breeze,

Whose strength was Love as he smiling sprang

From his starry terraces.

We parted and after parting
The sweet thoughts lingered yet,
Soft thoughts that took their starting
From a will that would fain forget.
I was dull in the drive with my Hostess home;—
She had gone, and the sun was set.

Again.

We met again and strangely felt and shyer
And spoke in cold cold courtesy and past
To greet our friends, it seemed a shadow cast
Its long lance at our feet, said, draw not nigher,
A sword unsheathed between, you cross it not;
Depart, the world is wide this but a little spot.

The very leaves sang, life is all forgetting,
You've known each other and again may know,
Wait till the eve when shades are long and low,—
A rising Sun is not the same as setting:
The same Sun that sought yesterday the West
Will sink to-day with other thoughts to rest.

The World is old not young and has to borrow From form and fashion half its life they say, To-day was ne'er the same as yesterday But wait a little till Time brings to-morrow:—

But what are you to her or she to you?

If she is false, alas, will you be true?

Silence, sad voices, silence, she is nearing
And soul meets soul in secret sympathy,
There is between us something you and I,
It draws back ever tho 'tis aye appearing,
It warns me off and I would break away;
Stay, she imperial bids me, and I stay.

The past ignored, the lately past together,

Last evening there was much we left to tell;—

We meet so late we scarce could say it, well

We've time before us still;—I wonder whether

That woman knows her dress is on or not;—

What were we saying?—I've forgotten;—what?

- "O yes the place is just the same as ever,
 We've two new Chaplains, men with small white ties,
 I beg your pardon, you've not your franchise
 From Mother Church, I'll rule my tongue and never
 Transgress before you; well we are old Friends,
 Chaplains are Chaplains, there the matter ends."
- "Old Friends, 'tis nice to find we're not forsaken,
 That there is Someone left to, * * * well you know,
 —We'd best go down and join the crush below—
 The few years past of me, how I was taken
 And flung out on the world, I've learnt in these
 More than they taught us in our nurseries."
- "You laugh, well so must I, but I must burden
 And school you for your levity, now go
 And bring me—anything—or so and so—
 But 'bide awee,' as you Scotch say, I'll guerdon
 Your willingness, and pilot you thro our Fair
 That threaten to make wreckage of your care."
- "Good night; I must away; now do your duty:

 My cape, my driving gloves, and now my carriage.

 You see one of the settlements of marriage:

Its a rich wine and sought for, old and fruity,
But hold it for a moment to the light:—
That rug; the reins; their heads; good night, good
night!"

Common Thought.

Broken upon the common bank
Of mutual thought our Spirits lay,
We always had so much to say
Whene'er we met, so much to rank
Together and compare;
You thought all this, well so did I.
We used to wonder at it there
And test our thought and try.

Low gleams from dawnings that were dead
Still left their lustre on the World,
A morning fair and past and pearled
With tender dews the sky had shed
Upon a common earth;
We had a fellowship of thought,
As springs are sought for in a dearth
My Soul her Spirit sought.

Old Time.

We wandered away to the dreamlands of old the gardens forsaken

Of all but joy and delight and memories dear of eld,

Her eyes sought mine, with a sudden storm our hearts were shaken

And stopped their beating together by some strange power withheld.

We were one in the dear dead past there was never a word to say;

Silence, the thought is ill it hath been but it cannot be:
The slumber that slipped to our souls in the twilight of
yesterday

Swam up soft and settled upon herself and me.

There among all the others it needed not voice to tell

It had come, and we were standing as we once stood long ago,

Or ever I'd heard of a winter or known a summer that fell

When Life was a beautiful morning in the Sun's first rising glow.

Among so many voices we spoke not, but spoke alone, Mid all that ringing of laughter who laughed but only we;

They are many, many around us, there may be many a stone.

But the stones are cold and know not, what matter then if there be! Invitation.

Why did you speak to me Sweet
That evening under the trees?
Why did you bid me meet
You again among all these?

Why did you tell me stay
As you were the last to go?
Why did you send them away
And say you would follow slow?

You came to me to command And not for any goodby, Altho you held my hand They thought in courtesy.

Stay, we will follow them; wait

Till the last of them all be gone!

May I tax your escort just to my gate

Or must I walk home alone?

You have not been to call,
And been in the place a week,
Be your circle large or small
There's no excuse, don't speak,

That is your penance first,

And then you must come and see
The cradle in which we both were nursed,
And how the world's treating me.

Are we not both the same?

I feel it, I know it, yes,
Altho I have changed my name
And am dressed in a longer dress.

But come they are waiting for me
Tho I'd sooner walk than ride,
You remember dead D'Elormie
In the song of the Ring and the Bride.

Here they are, stopping nearer,
Nearer than I thought.—
Just mark the woman.—They're dearer
Now than the last I bought

But I think they're better. Been waiting Long? We have followed you fast, Altho we have been debating Which are the best to last.—

Good night! good night! now steady:—
They are restive having to wait.—
To-morrow we'll all be ready
To see you. Dont be late.

Gone like a shade or a swallow,
Gone, and where will I end,
With those fierce wild stars to follow
That burn thro the name of a Friend.

The Visit.

A dainty lawn with English oaks and laurels Where silence with the slightest whisper quarrels And says "Be still;" down the bank willow trees, Seem making for the water, tiny seas, Twin oceans with an island each; between Runs a small Darien with soft grass green On which slim shadows fling themselves and play Like Sea-nymphs, sporting in each mimic bay A moment till the bright breeze tosses them Back to the shore; beyond fair flowers gem A rolling Down, that stretches to the hills About whose feet murmur fern-feeding rills.— On either side the mossy woodlands spring Full of the songs of sleepy birds that sing Half-slumberful, and look from overhead On grass-grown paths, soft still and carpeted From Nature's loom of mosses; to and fro Great butterflies like living jewels go, Or like the Spirits that we see in dreams Of morning splendour, or the rainbow gleams That slip o'er summer streamlets; lazily The distant Sun was sleeping by the sea Too tired to turn and kiss her in his sleep. She too was tired and slumbered full as deep.—

I entered, she who met me was the same Who once between me and the whole world came, Bade me recall the years that had gone by And—Who has changed now, is it you or I? Here is the little Lady that you lost

Take a good look, your last. When you have

crossed

That courtyard, lift those curtains, you will be With all the Guests invited here to see Our meeting. I must change this masquerade. Go boldly on, I'm coming soon, she said, And slipped off like a shadow thro the ferns.— O how old thought when it is lost returns At but a face or picture, voice or word, Or ever at the call of wind or bird. The tender memories of the gone-before Sprang to my side and—but the opened door Across the court sent out its minister To call my thoughts again away from her.— The usual greetings and the general hush And the cold eyes for Strangers, meant to crush Any advances till they know your Name Connections, Fortune, Everything.—She came, Her greeting short but sweet; she show'd her flowers Her favourite Authors, Poems, Pictures, Powers Of force or fiction, and I knew them all: Her voice was softer than low waters fall But changed and strange and distant and reserved.—

The light repast had been announced and served And the Guests scattered thro the lawns and leas In converse, or sat silent neath the trees. I was shown this and that, an hour or two And now the Sun to lower westward drew, The Guests departed, we left nigh alone. Whereat she in an almost injured tone,

With queenly condescension in it blent And double meaning for the Hearers meant.— All are engaged, none going to the sea So will you come and take the drive with me?

The Drive.

Alone, at last alone
Alone, and side by side,
Against our faces the sweet breeze blew
Fresh from the arms of the tide.

I turned away and looked Over the salt of the sea, When I caught her eye, it was full and bright, Was it a tear for me?

And sudden rose to my eyes
A sense as of sudden tears,
And I seemed to be looking not over the sea
But over the stretch of the years.

Voiceless: we had no voice Never a tongue for speech, We bade them wait by the rocky cove And we wandered down to the beach.

The sun was setting in glory As arm in arm we moved, Down thy shore, O Passionate Sea, More passionate had we loved! Bright are the skies that glow
In thy trembling arms O South,
We had fed as Babes upon milk from thee
Thou had'st kissed us on the mouth!

And now we were brought again
Together as from the Dead,
Brought up as the Dead from their grave by the East
O East that art warm and red!

The Sun was parting swift
From the World and laid his fingers
In soft caresses on all that were,
A caress that loves and lingers.—

A low voice swept the shore He sunk away from our sight, As the Stars sprang out and spread aloft The woven mantle of Night.

Silence but silence broken

By a wild and passionate cry,

Heart beat to heart for a moment's space,

Ah why did that moment die?

They parted they ceased they severed, The one grew that you and this me, We trembled and turned scarce knowing we went Away from the shore of the sea. We drove in silence homeward And when I was fain to light, Tho neither had sign nor voice for a word There ne'er was a deeper good night.

The Letter.

I left them all, I left them all and wandered
Apart and from the rest,
And drew the folded message from my breast
Where it had lain and whispered to my heart:
I sank upon the mosses down and pondered,
Dear thou hast been and art.

O come, O come once more, I know not whether The thought of what I think is—come to me Where yesterday we marked that hollow tree We played by as two children, and you said Tho both of us are standing here together The both of us are dead.

Last night we spoke not tho the trees had spoken
All thought unto us had we heeded them,
Or read the bright letters with which the Sun did gem
The western skies until they sparkled o'er,
Severed, united, and again were broken,
To be made one once more.

Come when the sunlight silvers bright the dawning,
Or ever the World is burning in his gold
To whisper to us that we too have grown old,
And are not young to-day as we were erst
A few years back, our hours have scarce left morning
But left it to be cursed.

O Man and Woman is this all the meaning
That is indeed of you, O blithe New-comer?
O hoped for longed for Harvest time and Summer
Is't thus with Winter you deceive us now?
O wild Grapes ripened bitterly, what gleaning
Is bitterer than thou!

I may not call thee ought but him of olden
Who was not me but part of me and life,
Sister and Brother were we, man and wife
We knew not of them fresh from our fair home,
By all things that recall that past that golden,
O come to me O come!

Rendervous.

Upon my breast upon my breast she lay,
The cool clear breath of morning seemed to chill
Her heart to death, so soft she drooped until
Her two blue eyes like those of baby day
Opened upon me, and then passed away
Beneath the shadow of their lids, our hearts

Beat passionate together, cheek to cheek We sat beneath the trysting tree, by starts And fits our breath passed; ceased; we sat so still We might be marble quarried from the hill And wrought and chiselled but not yet taught to speak. My arms were round her holding her to me. And round my neck she twined hers tenderly And drew her face to mine, till kisses grew And blossomed on the roses of her mouth, Ah poor young Children of the sunny South Or right or wrong ye know not what ye do! Soul passed to very Soul as met our lips, A vagueness stole on us we knew not where We met, or we were flesh and blood, or air, Or shadowy Spirits joined in death to give To each what life could never grant, to live One mixed with other. But a dark eclipse Came o'er our thoughts: a moment, and apart We drew and stilled the beating of our heart. Thought struck us deadly keen and bitterly And we were parted yet seemed not to see For why we parted, till a voice rose low And shook the light leaves crying 'twill ne'er be so.—

Darling, the thought is wild, it cannot be,
It rises up and sunders you and me
And cries out ever depart, depart, depart.
Is there no more than this: we have the past
And all fair moments, far too bright to last
And live on in the future; we must go;
Henceforth our paths run wilder thro the world;
Live to ourselves and ever strive to throw

Away from us the fair dreams that have pearled The bosom of Life hereto: it is not Death We have to face but ever dying breath A whole life long, but face it boldly, set Our lives to win and wear the coronet And not to foul it: we must part. Again Shaken by some strange storm I stayed, and she Cried, "Is this all Love that you have for me? This all, this all!" And like the sudden rain Of tropic showers her tears fell bitterly Upon my breast whereon she laid her head; "O Life," she moaned, "O Life, that I were dead And you dead with me;" suddenly she cried, "Kill me, and so I will have lived not died If you die with me; I speak wildly, yes, But from my heart and in its bitterness." Then stilled again, the storm of passion spent.—

It cannot be: come Darling, and we went
About the happy wood, we did not care
For much of converse, over all things there
The solemn hues of sadness spread their wing.
O happy woods have ye no song to sing
Attuned to sadness? on my arm I felt
Hers quiver oft convulsive as we walked
In sad communion tho no word we talked
Where Nature spoke our sorrow. Then we knelt
Beside a forest pool, and long we gazed
Upon us mirrored in the depths below,
And looked away into the depths beyond
And then up to the skies our looks we raised
Seeing far off the sheeted peaks of snow,

And o'er the rolling Downs where cattle grazed
And back into the little mirror of woe.

We rose up comforted and turned to go,
Our hands were grasped, each scanned the other's face,
She marble stood, I turned and left the place;
Till looking back I saw her slowly turn
And gaze once more into the deep pool down,
Pluck from the rocks beside a silver fern
And from the Tarn's side cast a pebble brown
Upon the waters, watch the circles die
After brief dalliance with the morning light,
Low to herself she cried one bitter cry,
And then slipped like a shadow from my sight.

The Last Twilight Walk.

We turned from all of them, they marked us go, We cared not, we had much to say, we went In that last evening's golden after glow That with the sheen of silver moonlight blent.

Silent, a space between us, neath the trees
We walked and talked of many things anew,
And as we further wandered, by degrees
While the shades darkened still we closer drew.

Until we felt the beating of our hearts
As side by side we wandered back agen
To whence our almost childish memory starts
Or ever it thought of women or of men.

Back back our thoughts went walking hand in hand And took us with them, took the bar away And left us standing as we used to stand, Two children as they stood, when tired of play

And weary with a very wealth of joy

They ceased and stayed and felt they knew not why
In that young life that they were Girl and Boy,

So strove to lean back to the past and try

To grasp a something that they knew was there, And looked each other's eyes to strive and read The secret that makes all of Nature pair, And failing which to fall and faint and bleed.

The same old something as when they sudden ceased From childish prattle to grow serious:—

Now we knew all, we saw it deepened, increased,
But no more ours;—a chill grew over us.

We drew apart once more, we spoke again
Of things we little cared for, felt that we
Must talk altho each word were bitter pain,
Must act our part awhile, tho that were misery.

Parting.

It is all over now: The last word, the last kiss. The cold and marble brow. The passionate lips, for this World all is over now. We must meet no more, We must live life only to smother life. O Bitterness! O wife! Not mine, another's wife! No more, no more, no more, For all is over now; For all is over now. When we came to that tree A sudden paleness seemed to dwell Upon her, she turned to me And in each other's arms we fell. And she wept bitterly For all was over now. One for her only Child,-One for his only Friend,— Both may be reconciled To what is only present and hath an end. With us 'twas different there, A dull and dead despair. For all was over now. There we buried our Love Where long ago he was born, And the very stars looked down from above

Their cold eyes ceased their scorn, And they grew full of pity for the dead, Dear Stars, you looked down shining over head When Children we were wed. Why were ye not pitiful Who ruled our destinies? O tender tearful eyes Are ye not merciful? Why did ye look not on us lying dead But wedded in death beneath your Southern skies! O Night! O quiet Night, O still breast of our Mother Night, Art thou the Mother that thou wert of yore? Thou borest us Children, Twins for one delight, O tender Mother Night, Why mad'st thou not us one for evermore? O Pitiless with thy cold clear starry eyes! Hide Thou thy face Thy silver shining face, Come with deep clouds and darkness but not light, Thou who hast felt love's bitter fruitlessness, Dear Dian, hide thy face, Nor light this sorrowful place, Nor shine upon our sight: Look not on her and me In our life agony, But in thy cloudy mantle veil thy face! Soft Sea-breeze from the South Thou who hast often spread her girlish curls Upon her silver neck and kissed her mouth And laid her light robe o'er with dewy pearls

Comfort her! Comfort her! O strong and sorrowful Breeze Who bearest thine own sorrow and the seas, Upon my strength confer To bear my sorrow and to soothe her grief! O thou that stillest each leaf, The Darkness of the Night, spread thy large wings And fold her in kind memories when day Would mock her, being gay, She sad at heart and sick with sorrowful things: Teach her to wear her woe Till it become a pure white robe and raise Her thoughts from all the past of Earth below, To join in those sweet songs now heard but dim The wondrous voice of veiled Seraphim, Who that have doubly suffered now doubly praise.— We dared not dream the end, the bitter strife Of parting, the last agony, the jar, The riven cords that bound us, dare we part;— One kiss, one last kiss with a breaking heart,— One kiss, one last kiss on that desolate shore,--O cruel cruel vow! We tore ourselves apart. And each passed onwards on the path of life Setting their face to their peculiar Star, To meet no more, no more, For all was over now.

After-thoughts.

The storm is passed, the storm is passed, my barque Tho shattered still hath kept above the storm; My soul tho straught and tempest beat hath found It hath a shelter from the seas, an ark, A resting place in right: the fiercely round The wild waves howled like wolves, till soft and warm A sigh stole thro the air and stilled the throng; Called me, "Why stand you here? you do no wrong, They are not cruel these wild waves that cry But fleecy-soft, sink in their arms and lie In happy sleep, send forth thy dreams and see Them dreams no longer but reality:-Once and once only, this thy once, no more Wander along the bitter sands and smile Bitter at heart upon the sullen shore Answering the stormy sorrows of the coast With peevish plaint, thou hast gained it not lost, 'Tis ripe, 'tis here, thou may'st be glad the while If thou wilt drink the flowing cup and leave The cold hard-hearted rock whereon you grieve." Soft Voice away, back o'er thy treacherous sea, Away, 'tis vain, thou hast no part in me, O cruel that thou art, away, away, Thou art no bright Dawn but a mock of Day. "Nay, I am soft and slumberful and bright, My fields are fair, my fruitage to the sight Is ripe and golden, it is at your lips My chalice, drink or e'er the moment slips

Away lost thee forever, drink 'tis thine; See how the bubbles of the draught divine, Like tiny stars upon a lake, spring up To draw you down and tempt you drink the cup." It is dashed from me, and the fading voice Laughs scornful, "As thou wilt receive thy choice." A voice more sad I hear than that before, "'Tis spilt, 'tis empty, 'twill be filled no more!" O instant thoughts that form the Man and set The actions of a Life in one regret How near ye drew to me! All evil flows From passion on to passion, as it grows Expanding ever like a blood red flower With leaf and petal, till in evil hour Its own fire burns it up and from the tree To leave the bitter fruit of memory Clinging forever to the blackened branch. A single thought is infinite to launch Man out for good or evil influences And form a Life, form it for more than this, At least I hold it so, for other lives. Thro each successive birth the old survives And strikes hard at the Present, at times with tears And sorrow for what is lost, times it doth take An instant and so pack it full to grind And wear us down with some relentless flood. Our lives are shaped in moments not in years, And Love alone is infinite to break And bend the formless fashionings of our mind. To mould them into harmonies of good, To recreate what was and is to be

Of true and pure; all else is cast away
And buried with the dead in one dark tomb.
Love too denied teaches us bitterly
The fulness of Love gained, and Love to come
We see in the foreglow of fast rising day.
'Tis Love that makes us what we are, the Soul
Is not in us before we love, Love brings
It down from Heaven on his silver wings
To still the tired thoughts that ever roll
Legioned against us. Even Love unfulfilled,
Begun but unfulfilled, hath priceless worth,
Better it should be lying cold and killed
Than it had never come to Life and birth;
Take Love away and what is left of earth?

We two have lost him, we had watched him rise And saw his red lips open, his baby eyes Open upon us as in our arms he lay: He grew and strengthened, joined us in our play, We parted, and he stood between us still: Years rolled and face and form almost forgot Love held the hands of each, united will To will the Mind said "You'll remember not." Sudden his hold grew slack and ceased and fell, We dared not keep him longer, but he stood A space between us, then feigned death and lay Deathlike between us: they said all was well And things had all been ordered best for good, They may meet now, the past is passed away. They met, the dream was broken, he arose And flung an arm around the neck of each And cried, "What need have I, what need to teach That which the youngest of the youngest knows?—
We three are Friends, all are against us three,
What matters it? you two belong to me
And not to them; I hate them passionate
And they as bitterly return my hate;
You two I love: "—A Form rose up between
And said "It cannot tho it might have been,
It cannot be!" Love turned and wept and fled
And wailed out "Think of my young days when dead
You find me, kiss me for the old love's sake,
My hidden sepulchre in your hearts make
Watered with tears, and bury there with me
If you can bury it, old Memory!"

At Last.

Cease, cease and trouble not, thou hast done well
O heart be still and trouble not, nor tell
Thy memories.

Hope dead and buried raise no stone to bring The wild thoughts back and keep them lingering About thy knees.

The Children thou hast lost that lately smiled, Nay, not thy Children, but thy only Child:— Be still O Heart.

Call slumber to my Soul, rise gentle Sleep In dreamless dark my sad remembrance keep Bid them depart. O ever flowing downwards to the West
The streams swim seaward still and sob out "Rest,
We seek for rest:"

Ever as from some sorrow they sought release
The Seas slip shorewards sighing "We seek peace,
Peace, where is peace?"

THE LAST ATLANTIS.

I.

Across a dim drear sea
That ever fitfully
Threatens the shores whereon we stand to-day,
Vaguely before our eyes
The last Atlantis lies
Over the waste of waters far away,
A dreamless land and dead with never a sound they say.

Around its sullen rocks
The moaning ocean locks
Her arms and strives to cry herself to sleep,
But ever as to the brink
Of slumber she doth sink
A voice wails to her from the nether deep,
And she awakes again only to wake and weep.

The Downs are treeless there,

The hard black rocks are bare,

But change and shift before the weary eyes

Of those who on that shore

Feel the drear Nevermore

And all its bitter wordless mysteries,

And hear the sorrowful wind sweep past, a storm of sighs.

Cold Things of black and dread
Like Vampires over head
Suck the warm thoughts like life-blood from the heart,
And straught and shivering Shapes
Shoot round the sullen capes
Then sail away, and with a sudden start
Lean backwards from their barques and cry, "Depart, depart!"

Strange undefinable Things
Flap their eternal wings
And smite the sickly air to sorrowful sound,
And ever full of fears
The wails of vanished years
Rise up complaining from the passes round,
Dead hopes and buried thoughts spring fresh-lived
from the ground.

And lovely Forms arise
Till turning back, Men's eyes
Meet never eyes but empty sockets in the skull,
And thro the leafless trees
Of barren memories

A Shudder slides like a shadow drear and cool And wrings its hands and groans, "I deemed you beautiful,"

Then faints in mist afar.—
There is no morning Star,
No Sun, no Moon, scarce anything of Earth,
The mad waves of the Sea
The only melody,
And hollow moans that in the caves have birth
Make with the waters wan a melancholy mirth.

II.

Dead, by his dead Bride's side,
Both in the arms of Death,
Joy with his soft spouse Sorrow slumbereth,
And on Bridegroom and on Bride
Gaze down the pitiful eyes of Death.

And very very sad,

Pure as some precious gein,

His deep eyes none can fathom dwell on them,

And with the thought grown mad

That he is but the tool of mightier than he and them.

He looks out o'er the sea,

But never comes an answer back to Death.

Still neath the dark sky the sea slumbereth,

And vain he strives to be

More than himself, thou canst be never more O

Death!

Thou canst not read beyond,

Thou seest the light but not who formed the gem,

Thou gazest down in sadness upon them

And in their death thou seest thine own, the bond

That holds thee yet to being is broken when broken in them.

III.

A light a little light
Rising away at sea,
And by degrees more bright
Grows all the mystery
Of the thick mists that hang,
The eternal wings that clang
Over us wearily.

For very weariness

The ranks of dark are fled,
And cape and cove and ness

Take orange blue and red,
And as it higher springs

The Day his mantle flings

Over the darkness dead.

And pinnacle and spire
That late were cold and gray,
Glow from the funeral pyre
Of him who could not stay,
And what was dark before
Now burns for evermore
In an eternal day,
In the white light of an eternal day.

EPIMETHEON.

"As I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle."—Job.

It is a difficult thing to follow out in writing, a Poem that has only had for its "fons et origo" a vague whispering of the Poet's mind, head, encephalon, or what you will. Begun without fixed form or fashion in the morning, it rapidly eloped with the first young thoughts, and stood of age in far fewer hours than go to form a day, an undisciplined, spoiled and precocious Daughter. One that had as it were no call to being, no summons to bring her into existence, no spontaneous feeling of pity or fear, of love or enmity, or any of the thousand influences that surround us in this little earthly world, but a half felt feeling of I know not what, a spiritprompting if I may use the term. I leave her such as she is; mould her and make her to your fancy, and perhaps at last she will become to you a cheering wife, a loving help-meet in your fellow thoughts and moments. Moments so short and fleet that we must catch them and transcribe them swiftly, instantly, or they perish and are lost to us for evermore.

EPIMETHEON.

MINE are not earthly steeds to drink Wild moments in a world of sin, They water on the day-spring's brink They have the stars to pasture in. No hand is laid upon their manes But mine, the Spirit of all time, No bridle holds them, nought restrains, My voice controls their flight sublime. Leap on my chariot, backwards lean And you will see all that has past, Then forward, things that have not been Fly from your eyes or gather fast. There is no day-star in the East The bar of night is black as Death; I stayed not weary nor had ceased, -My coursers need not gather breath-But that from Earth I heard a cry Uttered in agony of prayer, Answer me thou that standest by, A moment trust me we are there. I know you, you of mortal race, Who feel what makes you still believe That Adam left a glorious place To sink to Earth, to sin, to Eve.

I do not question Him who late Took Adam from his world of bliss, We are the Potter's sherds of Fate. We be: we know the will is His. Like him He made man till the fall Wrought even woe in spirit forms, We lost great glory tho not all Who rule the skies and guide the storms. Man had his Angel ere he fell Who hovers round him now unseen. Ascend where one may shew and tell What Man is, may be, and has been. Morn's shafts the dark of Night have cleft My pathway lies beyond them all, Ascend and see whom Adam left Man as he was before the fall!

In the soft arms of Sleep more still than Death, More still than Silence self, among the hills I long had lain, and now the Vision swept Upon me like a burst of Heaven's own light: So long so long the dark that I was spent In prayer for some deliverer, for some dawn, Some light to break upon my soul, some truth Of this dear vision of the dead long ago.—

Kissed sweetly, as the summer rose leaves kissed By the soft airs of sunset from their petals Sink into death on evening's dewy breast, My soul was drawn into an extacy Such as it ne'er had felt since when it left The faint remembered, which it could not fathom In the wild waves, that daily surging round Swept far away the feeble line that strove To sound the soundless waters. Memories That made all life one summer, yea all life One summer set to music: as the East Struck by the chords of the arising Sun Trembled into a harmony of love In unison with all create, the Song Of Sunrise heard upon the mountain tops When Earth below was swathed and set in sleep. Would call back something lost, some unexpressed And strange tho real longing for the past That was more than the present, more than life: A yearning back as one to manhood grown Yearns ever for a tender mother's face In a harsh world of strangers. Ah not love, More pure than purest love, more gentle, true, More calm and more convinced than ever love, A sad set longing for a something gone.— As at times passing thro the crowded streets We see a face and lo 'tis one we know, And then a cloud fills up the past again We look upon the face and know it not, I woke in wonder; seeing I had slept But knew not how or where, and wandered down And flung myself upon the shore, beneath The broad banana leaves that cut the sky Like shields of green against a bank of blue Flecked over here and there with plumes of cloud And sanguined with the swords of sunset, stretched

As in some giant hand from West to East To save the flying Sun that bowed his head And drank like a tired warrior of the wave, Drank, paused an instant, and was gone; the Sea Caught his last look upon her crest and hid The darkness in her hollows, for a time Silent before the coming shades of night She laid her lips upon the silent shores And whispered to them silence; thro the palms I saw the stars shoot one by one until All Heaven was like a silken net of light Knotted with spheres and constellations, soon The silver upon strand and shell and sea Told she was nigh, and Dian, with her hair Set round about with clouds and her large eyes Full of the midnight meeting, swam up slow, A South wind blew the clouds back from her face And bared her bosom and shoulders and her cloak. Stayed round her throat but by a single star, Floated far back into the depths of night.

I lay there lone, companioned only by Sweet Solitude and all her silent train That minister unto the mourner's mind When he sits sole and sad and great at heart With garnered griefs and sorrows, unlimbed, unwinged, That will not pass from him nor take to flight, But sit and brood and brood and ever brood Over sad self and its experiences.

A book lay by me in the lucid light That made the dark white day and spread the leaves With silver: 'twas a tale of bitter woe, But thro it ran as thro the solemn tides A murmur as of peace and more beyond. A simple story of sorrow told in quaint And old world stilted speech, the book lay wide Upon the sand, I read. "Irene leaned Her head against the broad breast of her Sire And felt his heart beat heavily, each beat Seemed harder than the last, tho Warrior brave And mighty captain among men a tear Not hers fell on her cheek, and thrice she knew He strove to speak and twice and thrice he failed Thro pity, till the pent up soul within Rushed forth as some strong mountain cataract Swollen with sudden rains, the summer still Had passed away and all was winter now." Thus far I read and ceased and from my eyes The page slipped like a shadow, then as the maid, I sought support in sorrow and I leaned My head against the giant breast of Time. My Father, and cast back my thoughts for comfort And murmured half unconscious as a child Must often think, when prattling in its play It sudden laughs out, "Mother long ago I knew this place and that, and I remember How I played thro the fields of flowers and lay Beneath the trees and built up daisy-chains That broke as soon as twined, and then we blew The dandelion puff-balls for the time, And looked into each others' eyes and laughed And ran and dabbled in the stream, and splashed The water in our faces, tried to catch

A straggler from the silver shoal of minnows, And startled ran when with a plash beside us A great black water-rat leaped in the pool And swam across and dived, or when a coot Went flip flip flip over the waves, and left Her nest and eggs uncovered. I remember-But you were not there Mother, only Girls And Boys, I don't remember who they were But I would know them if I saw them now. Did you take me there Mother? I'll be so good. So good, if you will take me there again." And I can see the Mother's wondering eves And almost fear. "Where Dear, and when and how?" She was a child herself and thought all this But that was long ago, so long ago, And quite forgotten and the child forgets. Ah me, 'tis nothing but forget, forget !-Oh thoughts deep buried in the rough breast of Time Unspeakable, O thoughts that lie within Our hearts and are so sacred and so cherished. We scarce dare give them to profaner air Or whisper them to others! I remember Child, I who also am a Child remember All that you said and more, faces that come Between us and the firelight of our life, Whose eyes are love who lean out from the past And stretch their arms to us and draw them back And smile a moment blessing us, then wring Their hands and weep, for they must fly away Sobbing out sorrowful "No more, no more!" Not only faces, forms that are not facts

Do we alone remember, but things done. O I remember doing this and that At-where? And then a mist springs up and fills The halls and chambers empty and desolate The silent shrine of Memory. O brief And broken the the beams may be, they come, The intense pleasure thrilling thro and thro The whole of us makes in one moment good The sadness and the sorrow of a life. O golden grain what famine would there be But for thy garnered greatness bounteous Past! So lay I droused in dreamful solitude Beneath the moonlight by that Southern sea, As one that sits in the young spring of life Where nought doth interpose betwixt the dim And twilight thoughts of eventide, alone Beside some torrent now nigh summer spent, A streamlet tiny that slips round the white And shining boulders, musing on the Past And on the Future till the daylight dies On dell and dingle, and the stream grows still As Evening shakes her long hair back and lays Her fingers on her lips and says "Be still," And shakes the stars out from her hair and kisses The sleepy sunlight off from sea and sky.— The owl swooped down and swept me with its wings Soft silken wings—the fireflies clustering Were shaken by the sea breeze like a swarm Of mimic meteors from the Tamarisk And danced together gaily, paying bright court And being courted, till they ceased and all

Their lights went out together. Nothing broke The unbroken stillness but the restless sea Tossing upon her bed, and my fraught heart That made me turn and toss and fling my limbs Upon the soft sand restless. The silent stars Slipped from their spaces in the sky and left The night clear darkness, Dian thro the dew Had sunk away as sleepy to the West, And all around there was the hush that comes When the earth takes a moment of sweet sleep Before the Heavens are stricken fresh with dawn And the day wakes to music. Silently The moments passed until there fell once more The trance on me that held me as in death; I dreamed, or know not if I dreamed: again I saw the Spirit that had flashed across My vision of yesterday, anew he stayed His rolling wheels beside me, and anew Came the soft mystic presence of the past. And like the South wind breathing thro my brain His keen lips moved to music, I arose And strengthened by the song and comforted Mounted his car and sunk me down in sleep.

The tender light that strongly bars
The secret places of the stars
From eyes that fain would look and see
And wrest from Life its mystery
Faded before me, and I cast
My sight upon the silent past

That surged up to my feet, as swells
The ocean laden with the song
And music of the sad sea shells,
Along the shore yea far along
The distant shores of this South sea!

Mine mine a moment, I will fling
My arms around and to it cling,
Until the shadows flee away
Till from the dayspring rises day.
Dear Past, dear Dead, O more than life
My better self, my Being's wife,
Short space is granted us to meet
Thee, moments mixed of life and death,
Ah Love and hast thou times as sweet,
The interchange of breath and breath,
Embosomed on the Past for aye!

O broken flame of flying lights
Confused and trembling, O Delights
Of pleasures spent and past away;
O Morning in the eve of Day;
O lost Companion turned once more
To wander with me on the shore
Of the old main of Memories;
O Sister of my infant time;
O Mother risen with starry eyes
About whom I may cling and climb
A Babe once more a Child at play!

Not that alone a something yet
Was promised, what I did forget
Was to be given back to me,
Sweet gift,—if gifts were all like thee.
Half-heard as softly spoke in dreams
The voices came, and fitful gleams,
And this and this I cried
I know, and then I sank again:
And Memory from me wonder-eyed
Sped forth but swift returned in pain
And sighed "There's more than I may be!"

I gazed on the new world of light
But soon it grew so strong and bright
My blinded eyes refused to gaze,
I closed my lids but still the blaze
Burned thro them to my inmost soul
Until dark clouds began to roll
'Twixt them and it, I could not bear
More than what first I feebly knew,
I could not face the glory there
Until by slow degrees I grew
To dare the splendours of the place.

The clouds drew back and then I wore Betwixt me and the things I saw As 'twere a silver silken veil Which dulled the beams that did assail My mortal vision, nay not dull It made them but more beautiful. Just as the moonbeam on the waves
Is fairer than the moon's own light,
And as the sweetest rosebud saves
A sweeter sweetness for the night,
The lights were lovelier tho more pale.

As some tired Traveller earthward slips
And drinks in with thin thirsty lips
The waters that he dies to drink,
My Spirit leaned across the brink
Of this new font and drank and ceased
But only with its thirst increased
And longed for more, but turned away
And flung upon the bank beside,
Played as a happy child at play
And dabbled idly in the tide,
Nor thought nor had a thought to think.

Joy lasts not ever a distress
O'ertakes of joy-wrought weariness.
The birds as stars o'er gem the West
Sing till each broods above her nest
Worn out and weary with delight
And silent thro the silent night.
The mother watches o'er her child
Till joy grows more than joy, she weeps
Into sweet dreams; the violet wild
Drunk with delight all dewy sleeps
And I lay in a dreamless rest.

How long I slept I know not, when I woke I saw a star above me in the skies, And heard a voice by me which gently said, "Yonder the Earth you've left behind, the Sphere Which might have been as we are in this world." And I for wonder held my peace and lay And listened only for that soft low voice.

There's a soul stirring potency In the mellow murmurs of the sea, In the soft whisper of the shell An inexpressible doth dwell, And more dear voice in Thee.

The wind that trembles thro the flowers Makes more than now existence ours, When all the sensual sinks to sleep Neath its sweet influence in the deep And twilight dewy hours.

Old thoughts are taken down from shelves Where they have lain, a longing delves Deep in the past and what has been And strives to leave this earthly scene And draw us from ourselves.

Yea stillness self and solitude Tho but in tones half understood, And very soft, and very low, As gentle waters ebb and flow, Whisper to us of good. But what are Nature's best replies To thine, O Thou of starry eyes, Who, stooping downward, touched my lips And freed them from their speech eclipse And said "Arise, arise!"

I rose and stood upon my feet and gazed Upon the Form beside me, than the light That bathed the lovely scene before my eyes It shone more brightly. Tenderness and truth And more than tenderness, a lofty power For good, a Form that brooked no thought of wrong, No breath of evil, stood by me and smiled: A smile half full of wonder at my wonder, A wonder at my waking extacy. But O the vision of all that I erst Had dreamed of! O the half thought thoughts that here Found their embodiment and perfectness! The inexpressible, the longed for more Because the longing knew not what it longed, The uncreated something in the mind That it knows not but it is conscious of. I would have broken from my Guide and flung Myself among the flowers upon the grass, Drunk in the Summer sweet, and climbed the hills And looked down on the rivers that I knew, To see the homes and see the happy plains And all things smiling in eternal peace. A bird's note struck my ear; I knew the notes, And when the silence drunk the melody Into itself and all again was still,

There came an echo as of far off seas Laughing in slumber upon shores and sands Of silver that I oft had wandered, listening The mellow music of wave wafted song That trembled from the sea-maid's mystic lyre And moved the very breakers in the bay To motion magical. Now thro the woods The breeze brought up the ringing laugh of youth, Flute clear and beautiful, and Children's cries Of innocence and mirth all tremulous In the sweet tones of childhood, warblings Of young birds sweet but powerless yet to sing— As often early when the Spring's first buds Are breaking out in beauty, from their nests The wee birds melt one's very heart in song, But half articulate and very sweet. Nature hath need of every voice she hath: The Bellbird, Bulbul, and the Nightingale, Have their appointed parts and fill them well In Earth's great orchestra. Yes, le aves and flowers And birds and winds and rivers, streams and seas, The sunrise and the sunset, and the hills Full of their glory or at morn or eve, And that dear time, the sweetest of times that are, Betwixt the dead day and the birth of night Have each and all their voices full of praise. O wondrous beauty of that olden land! O wondrous voices thro the air that was To me as new existence! I drank in The æther greedily, and started on And walked and ran and tossed my arms on high

And plucked the flowers and cast them at my feet And threw myself upon the ground and cried Aloud for answer. No reply came back The voice of all had passed away, and Echo Mocked me in mimic murmur with my own. I felt as one who has attained his end To have it dashed away in very scorn By some more powerful fate. I shut my eyes A moment dreamed, and when I opened them I saw my Guardian standing by my side And heard the soft low voice. Child vet a child, Impatient as all Children, see unseen And be no more a Child. My eyes were touched And gently closed and I was softly bid To rise and see. I stood upon my feet: Then O the vision bursting on my sight! Almost too grand to look on but my powers Were strengthened by my Angel. Now no more I saw things half-forgotten, dimly kept And garnered broken memories of the Past, But all the Past was now brought back to me And I lived in it present. Everything Was as it had been. I knew all I saw. And countless Friends and countless multitudes Of which none were but Friends I sprang to greet. So pure our love, all Earth had passed away; It was not love, an inexpressible That drew us each to each and made us one. Not each to each but all to all and made Us one with all create. The World was gone, I had no knowledge of an earthly World

And all its good and all its evil days, All, all had faded off and I was home. And then again the curtain was withdrawn And I looked down on this world and on that Longing to know what meant this wondrous change, This double being granted me to be, This self yet not self, this known but unknown. This all yet not all, this most yet something more. I turned me humbly to my Angel Guide But spoke no word nor had I need to speak— "All in your heart I know, 'twixt you and me Wells up one common fountain of deep thought We drink together, I am bid your Guide To be in all things but am not permitted, For so to the All-ever seems it good, When on yon Earth to show myself or hold In converse with you that sweet fellowship Which is permitted here, and you require A knowledge of the things that here you see, A knowledge of whatever in your heart Strives back to this, to its first starting point— Away back in the Ages, ere yon star That we call Earth swung into birth and light. This world existed: on it that great Name Before whom Seraphim their faces veil. Whose I am, verily the least of those that fly To work His will and worship the Unseen, Had set a Race; singly by Him create. Not born and not begotten each to each, But having being in each breath of His. Created perfect without power of sin

Created but for joy and purity Unthinking evil for no ill was there. A calm and passionless existence, but Intense with power for happiness in a world Where all create was perfect, full of love For there was nothing hateful, without hopes For to what higher could they spring than joy? It was a garden time in which man grew And basked in sunshine, summered by the seas, Drank in the morning dews the breeze of eve, And lived like flowers in their own odours sweet, Unknowing good or evil, right or wrong, For right was instinct and wrong was not born. This was until it seemed to Wisdom good The Earth swung out in That Worlds should be. strength

And all the Sons of Morn together sang
And shouted out 'twas good, and fitly framed,
Worthy to be the Paradise it was.
Ah, had you seen the young World in her prime
When light and dark were wedded to form one
That one the World, the young fair World now worn
But still how beautiful in her old days!
Fitted for Man it seemed to Wisdom good
To set one Adam, first create, on it:
In a fair spot upon that other Earth.
Waking as from deep sleep, and now endowed
With thought of good and evil and the germs
Of every knowledge, with a wondering back
For something in the day before the dark
Of sleep fell on him, wonderful and grand

In more than majesty compared with those Left in the former World, Image create After the fashion of the Everwise He held communion open without fear With Him before whose Awful Majesty The highest of the high Angelic hosts Would die away and be of those who are not. In his grand purity he stood and held His high Communion, and that other Being, That higher and yet lesser, taken from This World where all are one, was given him, Part of himself but more a part of Love— Ah, well, such knowledge was too great, the fight Between the new implanted powers was fierce, And goaded on by Powers that were without They struggled hard for mastery, in the end The strife proved fatal to the Earth, they fell. Of that thou knowest, I need not pursue The story down its bitter winding way Marked here and there with bloodshed and with crime; And furrowed out with countless flowing tears. That fall, for such it was, wrought woe in us The countless multitudes of such as I: The Powers and Thrones that rule the Universe And hold the natural forces of all space Fell lower in that fall tho not to sin. It darkened light and spread the evil spot Thro all the World. Nay, ask me not, I know No reason, there is one beyond us all Known only unto Wisdom. He hath said There comes the hour when all things shall be known. Here only to this Sphere on which we stand To sin was no approach, so the Allwise Saw good in wisdom to decree, and sin Has never breathed in this more perfect air. Here every child on Earth to Adam born Has an existence ere it leave for Earth Its home of bliss, and here is that instilled That is the common heritage of all That are of human race; 'tis passionless Save for deep yearning; scorned and crushed in some It flies for ever; there are those create Who seem to have no thought of other life But these are few, to most the feeling comes Brought by the times of Earth that are most near In their faint imitation unto those That are of this. When daylight dies away In gentle whispers over land and sea, When dying daylight mixes with the Night And builds that mystic moment when the Soul Makes half a spring to its forgotten Sphere. At early dawn when dreams not quite yet fled Mingle with melody of waking birds. Or when the noonday hush is over all. This hath a mighty power this wondrous first For those who turn back and drink eagerly Such draughts as they have strength and power to drink. They here draw in impressions of all good And the born into that wild world below With its sad heritage of sin, they carry From this a compensating force of right To aid them in the struggle. They may faint

But ever near them flows the fountain full, They drink new strength from it and live again."— He ceased and ceasing ceased that soft sweet flow Of words all set to music, slumber sank Upon my sense and set her seals on me: And from the peace that was sprang up strange thought And swept me on its bosom back, far back, Then on into the Future, and again Returning set me on the silent steps Of the closed Temple Past. Then by my feet There wound a wondrous throng of Memories. Some draped and hidden as they feared to see The light, and others with high open face And clear brows set for question and reply, Yet no one spake; and other shapes I saw Not Thoughts nor Memories, but Dreams that were Here real and existent. Some that caught The sunshine pleasure of all happiness Upon their varied raiment; others sad With wan drawn lips and eyes strained hard to catch The smile of Hope, but gazing gazed in vain, And as they passed wrung their hands wildly back And wailed out low in anguish; here and there Bright Cherub forms flitted about, and then A group of those Departed who were dear Stretched out their hands and smiled and passed away.— Then all things changed and huge chaotic rocks And deep deep tarns embosomed by the hills And held in their strong arms lay, still as Ghosts Lie in the white light of a winter moon Upon the snow clad mountain tops and slopes,

Before my eyes. Until a storm arose
And smote them from my sight, and gathered clouds
That took strange forms and ragged tortured shapes,
And frowned and fled, as soft light from the sky
Broke forth in glory over all I saw.

—I woke and heard the slumber of the sea Neath the broad breast of the high Indian Sun.—

PROMETHEON.

"For now we see thro a glass darkly, but then face to face."—

CORINTHIANS.

The younger Sister of the foregoing, akin yet not akin, springing like her elder unbidden into birth: the daughter of a few short hours.

There are two feelings in us, nay, not feelings, for stronger they are than ever was mere feeling, but two existences. One is ever yearning back to grasp some Gone-before, the other ever longing for a wild plunge into the dark Future. Dark yet not eark, for, "At dawning dear and dewy eve," we have glimpses, stray gleams of what is to come, equally strong as those that beset us with their evidences of a Past. The feeling, "We see a face and lo'tis one we knew," has just as clear an opposite. Something happens, something is seen, and we feel that that very sight or action is to occur at some distant period, the same yet not the same, and that we will then, remembering it as having now occurred, recall it with pleasure.

Any ordinary reading or acquaintance with one's fellows will show how strong the first feeling of a Past is, but the latter feeling of a Future comes I think only to a selecter few. On the first it is easy to call to mind many passages whose quotation here would be as needless as hackneyed, but of the latter, apart from passages inspired by religious belief, I cannot recall a single instance.

PROMETHEON.

TIME took me by the hand and led My footsteps on from thought to thought, From out the silent Past and Dead Then on afar from port to port. And ever as I strove to call Some certain thing into my mind, Before dim twilight was o'er all And inky night closed in behind. I cried for answer to my Guide But never came an answer back, But where the mists swept down to hide His finger pointed out the track. 'Twas thro a wild and wave-worn vale That seemed to close on either side. But as I swept down on the gale The rocks stood back and opened wide. And I was in a charmed boat That bore me on with swift advance, Around I saw wild visions float And all before a dim expanse. Time left me as I onwards bore And swept into the outward dark, The sad winds moaned out "Never more, Ah never more," and the faint spark

That shone there yet, went out as dies At midnight when the world is still The taper in a breeze of sighs And the wind wails around the hill. Time left me and I could not bear The bursting thoughts that rose in me, For what was I who wandered there? And if Time was not what could be? With lightning speed I onward past Thro clearer air and sea-bound caves ;— My barque was on the breakers cast And I was struggling in the waves. Lights flashed before my eyes, a dream Of other worlds and places fair Confused and trembling in the stream Of visions that swept round me there. Wild struggles yet for life, a cry Of agony and bubbling breath, Then fainter strife, a glimpse of sky, And last the peace and still of death. A sound of water ever more, A wail of wind thro grass grown graves, A slumber on a quiet shore, A murmur as of lipping waves.

Dead or alive I know not, but if dead
I lay but yet as I were half alive,
And if I lived I lay as one nigh death:
For all was stillness yet not still, the wings
Of Pime had ceased to smite the air and beat

The moments out to sorrow or to sin. To joy or passion, Time was gone. There gazed An awfulness upon my face, as glares On us in midnight dreams an awful face Whose eyes we cannot scape, tho slumberless We strive to hide away before its frown. Searched out, sought thro, I withered neath the eye That looked down on me, vain I strove to hide Myself from that great one pervading thought That filled the past, vainly to cry; no prayer Burst from my lips, speechless, and without thought To think or speak, careless almost I lay Before the fixed face of Eternity! O hour of Agony, alone, alone, With but the awful knowledge of that Presence: Alone, alone, for ever yet not alone, Yet ever and for ever alone, alone!

> Dead, dead, dead, Ever the surf in my ears Rang the monotonous notes, Like the march of the feet of the years Trampling over my head.

Lost, lost, lost,
Answered the voice of the shore
To the grinding breakers and sea,
Then ceased as if ever more
Bound with a bitter frost.

Ghosts, innumerable Ghosts, The Mist swept up on its wings, Phantoms and forms of dread And weird and wonderful things Strange and shivering hosts.

Boats, a myriad boats, A fleet swims up to me, Oared and steered by the Dead, Over the flats of the sea See how it swarms and floats.

No more alone, the loneliness had passed, And thro the distant seeing of the mind Straught Shapes took form and in wild order stood Short space, then parting shook their wings of cloud Till all was wild confusion and vast Things Rose up and wrestled, stood, and set, and fell. Titanic Forms, not men but kingdoms eld, Dim dark unknown weird vague wild wonderful, Shifting and changing like the shifting skies That lap the sunset of a stormy day. Dull stony hues of leaden coloured cloud Hanging o'er heavily round the sinking sun Like thoughts that haunt the heavy hearts of men In sorrow and in solitude. These faded Or brightened into broader bars of bronze Shot here and there with the dull hue of hate, The lurid copper, that in turn passed off Leaving all harsh and heavy, an iron sky

That paled away in steely blue, which soon Paled too and left the sun to sink in gold And broader bands of glory; in his parting He glowed more brightly than before he set, And gaining in brilliance as the dark drew nigh He rushed to death in one broad blaze of light Leaving night over all; a twilight night Not dark nor bright but a weird day in which Night wedded to the day made half not clear The pale horizon and the world around. I marvelled greatly at the lights that shed Now past their dying glories on the Sun, For never had I seen the Sun of earth Sink into slumber ever brightening more Until he sunk beneath the sloping sea. Wondering I lay, when suddenly a shape Stood betwixt me and the dim plain beyond: Taller it was than manhood that I knew. Of higher front and more severe serene, Majestic in a native majesty It knew not but displayed, foremost it stood Of all the half-seen Shapes that swarmed behind; Clothed by no art of hand or defter loom, A tawny skin cast round its limbs, all else Was bare and grand, it stood primæval Man, The conscious power not faded from his face. Unarmed for he was named the lord of all, And fearless for there yet was nought to fear, He looked upon me and laughed curiously And low unto himself and passed away.— Another took his place less large of limb

And clothed more, and bearing in his hand
The arrows and the implements of chase,
His look was high and haughty but there mixed
With all his looks a cunning and cruelty,
A first germ of suspicion and distrust,
He passing started when he saw me lie
And drew an arrow half, then slacked his bow;
Held still an instant, fixing his keen eyes
Upon my form, smiled scornful and was gone.

Before me stood a Shepherd King, his brows Were full of craft and change and destiny, Thought worked thro all his face, he builded up Strange forms cementing them with blood and death And his thin lips curled cruelly, he fixed His eyes upon the Future; his old form Was gone, the Shepherd shape was cast away, And he stood up in long embroidered robes Written with forms and signs, he read the stars And in his ears the words for ever rang "Behold the King, behold he lives for ever:" He seemed o'er worn and weary at the Voice And sank in splendour, ever as 'twere in scorn Of fate beyond his fashioning he sank And faded slowly as unto the words, "The King lives ever but the King must die."

The sound of Archers and the noise of bows, The sound of Captains shouting to their hosts, The sound of arrows thro the startled air, And the ground trembling to the tread of men. The Warrior stood before me; "Who can stand Against my sons?" he shouted, "Who can stand?"

A helm was on his head his knees were hare His right hand grasped a spear and with his left He stayed a chariot, where the Charioteer Could scarce curb the twin steeds that tossed the foam Contemptuous from their nostrils and afar Snuffed up the air for battle; glorious In wealth of trappings, as their master shon Bright in the brilliant colours of the loom, His bow and quiver were inlaid and worked With legend of the contest and the chase, Here foemen bled and here the desert King Rolled his death agony in blood and sand Gnawing and tearing at the keen winged shaft That pierced his neck and shoulder quivering Now in the last extremity of death. He raised his bow for the attack and laughed Fiercely and loud against the doomed and cried "Ho, who can stand against my sons in war?"

The noise of battle passed away and ceased, As wind upon still waters that has ceased To blow and all is still again. A breath Of balmier air fell on me, softer sighs Of sun-warm breezes blown thro Tamarisk And Banyan, and o'er streams where Lotus blooms Swung sleepy neath the light of Southern suns. A swarthy Form slipt like a shade across My vision and stood before me, gray and sere And older than the oldest moss-grown fane Of this old land of elder centuries. His white hair reached his girdle, and his feet Were set upon the Cycles gone which long

Had slumbered dead forgotten to the world. In his dark eyes the light of other years Gleamed as the moon upon a summer night From still dark depths of waters gleams, the thought Of other days his ample forehead swept In restless visions of some future time: Parchments and palm leaves in his hand he held Inscribed with strange and long-forgotten things. But ever from them he would turn and strive To read a ready book that open lay Before him at his feet, he passed his hand Across his brows as one who long is wrung With ponderings on the agony of life, The greater agony of unknown death And all the wild beyond; his face was calm And looking up he seemed to read the peace In the pure æther overhead, but turned Wearily to the earth and beat his breast As the old agony filled up his soul With all its bitter days of hopelessness. He saw me not, with set eyes staring straight Into the open void that lay beyond He passed away, and half-heard from his lips I heard him murmur, "Hope, still is there hope!" The sad words lingered on my ear, as stay The murmurs of the sea still by us long After we leave the music of the waves And wander uplands from the shelly shore.— A low wail, cry of servitude and scorn, And a dark figure cowering ever down

As the in fear, altho at times there broke

A lurid light from out the passionate eyes,
And the strong arms were tossed aloft and dashed
In bitter anger on the rugged breast,
A fierce and frenzied passion that consumed
Itself in its own fierce and fiery flames
And trembled round and sudden ceased and cowered
And shook and cringed neath some expected blow,
And writhing to the whip a moment, fled
And left the spot all sorrow; till a sense
Of peace and meditative calm sprang up
To soothe the sad sight from my mind. The stars
Shot out across the silent sky, no moon
Was in the Heavens and the bright orb of Eve
Shed her white silver over shore and sea.—

Bent neath the weight of wisdom more than years. He came, his soft eyes on the circling stars Reading their messages to men, their fire Was to him symbol of the eternal fire That burnt within him, ever thro the night He stood there silent the interpreter Of the seals set by Nature on herself. Peace was upon his face but in his hands He bore the weight of war, warrior and sage-Combined, and at the same time one with all The elemental forces of the World. He drew this life about him like the dress That covered something sacred underneath, Some spark divided from the common whole And separate only for a term of years Again to be united and be one. The slow stars changed, new lamps and lights arose

And paled away in the more growing light And silent from my gaze he passed away. Bright streamers shot across the sky, the air Was filled with glory, glowing with the dawn And glorious as the new rising God Of gracious day, a splendid Shape arose: So perfect in its beauty and so fair It seemed of some diviner world than all Of those bright Forms who had passed on before. Naked, but in such perfect nakedness, Such utter faultlessness, the very thought Of robe or garment was profanity; It stood as it had left Creation flawless: A very divinity of human form. It took all things that were and gave them part Of its perfection, river, rock, and tree, Streams, oceans, mountains, valleys, cataracts, All things that were of nature, all of life, Found in this fair Being's advent life renewed And glorified in more than was their grace; Yet in its liquid depths of eyes there lay A vearning deep, and vague as infinite, "More than mere beauty, more than life" it cried. And for an instant all its face was torn By sudden storm of passion, as the shame Of secret sin shone from its peerless eyes. It cried aloud, the cry was answered not, So turned away and said, "'Tis vain to cry," Setting its face to sorrow for a while Or sinking from its self to sense and pleasure,

Only to look with loathing on its joys

And with torn heart to cry in agony
And answer back, "I cry, but cry in vain!"

A blare of trumpets thro the still, a sound Of trained and martial feet, the ring of swords The steady tramp of legions sheathed in steel:— He stood before me often seen before, Shone from his eyes the empire of the World, And like the Ignis of his country's God His right hand held the baton of command Stern and yet equal, meting out to each The rights of grand equality till all The World was one Republic: thro the years He grew and in the distance saw the time When he would conquer, steady to that end He strove and struggled; at the last he stood His foot upon the necks of captive kings, Each province of his grand estate an empire. Time laid no rein upon his neck, he stood Lord of the present and the past, the future Lay full of rule before him but his lips Twitched to an agony concealed, beneath The eagle of his eyes there was a woe But it had no expression, motionless He stood in the full glare of day and dared The full sun's fierceness, till he slowly passed Away before me but unto the end I saw the traces of his stern proud smile.

With faith that burned hot thro his swarthy face One next arose, his eyes were keen and dark, Crisp and black-bearded, of grim countenance That looked into the future and beheld It present and accomplished to his wish. He stood and in his hand a naked sword Piercing a book, by these were life and death And by the trust he had of his high powers He won a way thro all the World of men And wrote his name upon the page of Time, That graven there for ever it might stand Holding for heritage nigh half the world.

I ceased to gaze a moment, he was gone And the world grew in darkness; heavily The moments passed and dark and dead the gloom. Seen indistinctly thro the murky night Up thro the middle black a shape arose Cowled and clothed in many garments, holding All knowledge as a closed book in his hand The other held in warning out to all. "Lo I read not, nor may another read!" In his harsh presence I could scarce draw breath Such sense of dull oppression checked the flow Of blood thro all my limbs, a languor laid Its hands more heavy on me and the gloom Grew every moment gloomier. His sight Shot baleful fire at mine, his lips were coarse And his voice harsh from hidden wine and thick. Woe spoke thro all his eyes when they were dead And for a time unlighted up of passion. With bitter envy down on me he gazed But now a powerless Phantom of the past Incapable of either good or ill, He passed in sullen silence from my side, And hid himself among the silent shades.

The shadows fled and one drew near o'er wild And tremulous with passion unrestrained That long and deep the Centuries had stored Within him for his mighty bursting forth, His eyes shone wild with new gained liberty And a bright coronet was bound about His ample brows, but with the roses twined A bitter circlet of soul-piercing thorns. His cry was joy, but often as he cried The cry "Woe, woe" burst forth as unawares From his too-ready lip, the cup he held Was filled with wine but sanguine streaks of blood Show'd here and there. He drank it to the dregs And raised his hand and cried against all things And cursed himself that it was vain to cry, Till weary of the fight of Self and Fate, He sunk in slumber on the strange stained soil.

Then one drew nigh and looked on him, and stood In contemplation for a while and raised His broad brow to the sky and scanned the stars. All knowledge stored within his brain, the winds, The seas, the earth, and all the elements Bow'd to his will, the Heavenly harmonies Unknown before were read of him, the world Did homage to his giant intellect. He sent his soul back thro the past and saw Things that had been, and read them at a glance. His thought went forth thro all the seas and lands Their depths to him lay open, wherever thought Might follow there his thought had found the way, And in the perfect beauty of all knowledge

He seemed the fairest fashioned I had seen. But as he turned his eyes again on me How more than all of those that were before Was his soul wrung with bitter agony. The agony of feelings unfulfilled, The agony of heart that longs and cries, And dashes blindly against all the bars That keep it back, only to sink again Broken and bleeding to the earth. O Soul Bitterer than death the thought of after death! A sleep a dream a slumber by the Sea, An ever wakefulness in light eterne, An ever groping in eternal dark, An ever striving for a ne'er attained, An ever climbing up to fall again. O Life, O Agony, there is no being beyond! I die, and when I die, I die and am not, I fade away and am forgot in Space, I am again of all the things that are, Part of all things that now are part of me! It cannot be, ah no it cannot be, It cannot be, for there is in me here A something, something living vague and faint, A fancy merely, no I feel it, vague, I cannot grasp it but I feel it here. Hence, where I go, I cannot will not die, There must be more and life beyond the grave Hereafter! O if this were only all, And never hope to leap against the throat Of Death and win out in that mastery More than grim Death would promise! Answerest thou, Nothing beyond! O Death! "Beyond," My Spirit whispers "There is more beyond!"

He ceased and pressed his hands against his brow Deep furrow'd by the heritage of years,

Of all the years and centuries o'er past,

And tho his soul was wrung with doubt and pain

About his lips there played a smile of hope

And in his eyes the light of things beyond

Shone like a star, thro all the shades of life

With face upturned to catch the light above

He passed away, and hope rose in my heart

To hear the sudden song of morning stars.

Swooning away neath the sweet sense of music My soul sank softly in a dream of good; A happy dream from which I woke and saw Before me radiant as the sphere that shines At evening, and before the dews of dawn. A Being beautiful; her large dark eyes Seemed full of other worlds than ours and set In high communion on some far beyond— "Not here, not here," she cried. " I oft have fallen And stumbled on the roadway of my life, But I am held, sustained and comforted." From her fair garments snowy white there blazed All the pure splendours of celestial light, And on her forehead high and calm and clear Shone one bright diamond like a distant sphere From its pure heaven of blue, her cloudy hair Rolled to her feet like the silk spun at eve In sunset skies, her delicate hands were crossed Upon her bosom, and loftily as meek

She moved on musical upon her path Up from the earth into the blue beyond Till lost to sight among the silver stars.

Again in deep dreams slumberful
I sunk away as Evening cool
Sinks sleepy in the arms of Night,
And o'er my drowsy senses stole
The presence of another soul
And a most calm delight.

Again like trill of waking bird
The music of that voice I heard
Soft, low and very full,
It sounded like the showery spray
That gently falls the livelong day
On some sweet forest pool.

Heard far away in Eastern lands
Where the Sun leaps with outstretched hands
From clouds of fleecy curd,
And rising to his highest height
Sees the Earth slumbering neath his sight
Save where the still is stirred

By the soft rainbow falling yet
In silver spray and violet
And broken diamond bands,
And making thro the silent wood
A music heard and understood
As in mid course he stands!

Part of old Time were each and all of these. Bone of his bone and very flesh of flesh Now dead and gone forever as old Time Forever is dead and gone. What thou hast seen Will show thee it may be half understood All the dim past, the future lies before And hardly may be read: its pages open Upon us in our infancy, the Spring Of the pure knowledge that flows out from these First lesser grows, and further from its source Is sucked into the clay and common ground Until 'tis lost us, as each day closes in And Man grows more to Manhood. But at times Half unaware of feeling what he feels That which is ever present in all life The Future wakes within him, at a touch, A cry, a sigh, a something vague half thought, Fluttering the heart that has been lying cold With strange and new and wonderful delight. What marvel, he who leaves a gracious Land Must needs be travelling to a Land more fair, Or wherefore did he leave what was all joy And ne'er again to be regained, unless Some far off star shone brighter than this world With rays more soft and more serener still? Upwards and onwards, so it is with all, For all are travellers climbing to a height Unconsciously or conscious to ourselves, Tho some may linger in the vales below And gather gold about the river sands, And some may higher rise to purer air

Only to pasture on the slopes that slide Down to the wild sea underneath, some set Their faces hard against the cliffs and climb With desperate energy only to fall again, Again to strive to crown the peak, anew To fall and tear themselves and then to cease, And with hearts bleeding from their high hope failed Or angered by their falls, cry out aloud "Man cannot rise, see here where we have striven And striven in vain, man cannot rise," they cry. But some mount ever having that in them Which is a lamp before them in the dark, A ladder for their feet to climb by day, And falling often as they upwards strive They fall their faces to the height, and rise With a new strength and plant their footsteps firm, And rise, and ever rise, until they gain A little resting-place before they gird Themselves to mount the highest peak of all, Thence they look down in wonder at the Sea Beneath them, and the fairy slopes and glades That lie far down, the aim of many men, And drink in here a more diviner air And feel a largeness in their life unfelt Before, unhoped for: thro their heart upswells All a fair future, but the mists that roll 'Twixt them and it only allow a gleam Of glory to be caught at times between The rifts that close up ere their eyes can grasp The full horizon. Broken rays of light Shoot 'twixt the clouds, blown breaths of balmier air, The Past half pictured in the Future to be Once more the Present. The old memories gone Surging up fresh within them, as in the bay I have seen bubbling upwards to the sun To catch his smile once more, a fair pure pillar Of watery crystal, a fountain from the land That had burst from its island home, and thro The waves to spring up sweet in the salt sea. O as the past so surges up to many Doth not the future rise before you, rich With memories all to be fulfilled and given Back to your bosom, doubled intensified And fit to feed the hunger of the heart? The Past doth not suffice, there must be more Dear Past than thee, thou must become again An everlasting Present, till all Future Dieth before thy light eterne. O Past Thou art not dead, thou canst not ever die! O Past O Future thou art but one, the same, The one that has been and that yet will be Tho slumber steep thee for a little day! There are who say thou art not, in whose heart No thought of thee, no inexpressible, No ever longing yearning back again, No burning hopes for all the time to come Holds place or being; but across whose mind Is drawn the thick blackness of eternal dark To curtain out what is. What I know is. What is in all things that have in them life. No spark without a flame, and the spark burns Within them, and they cry "Nay all is dark!"

Hast thou no thought when Evening closes in Hast thou no thought,
Hast thou no thought when all the stars begin To light their lamps and evening closes in,
Hast thou no thought?

Doth nought address thee in the evening wind
Doth nought address,
When all the clouds like thoughts swim up behind
And climb the skies borne upwards of the wind,
Doth nought address?

Doth nought call thee from out the waterfall
Doth nought call thee,
When from the low branched trees the shadows tall
Creep slowly out to listen to the fall,
Doth nought call thee?

Doth nought inspire thee from the voiceful waves Doth nought inspire, When the soft sunset seas the shore set caves Embrace, and slumber slips down on the waves, Doth nought inspire?

Doth nought touch thee when all the skies are new Doth nought touch thee,
When they look down with baby eyes of blue
Ere half awake and morning still is new,
Doth nought touch thee?

Can you not hear the tree-boughs as they sing
Can you not hear,
Has this life dulled you so to everything
Can you not hear the tree-boughs as they sing,
Can you not hear?

All the old visions that I first had seen Swept suddenly before my sight and then As sudden vanished, and the wild beyond Opened more out as on a stormy day The clouds smote by a sudden stroke of sun Roll back and leave the pale horizon clear, Save where along the lower line the waves Leap ever up like hounds to seize a prev And drag it down among them to its death. The plain whereon I lay once more spread round Half lighted like the first false flush of dawn That shows things dimly for a while and then Dies back in darkness. Wearily I lay Oppressed with heavy thoughts and Eastward looked Heart filled with longing for the light delayed. The sweet voice fell upon me once again: Look up look up it cried and see the star, The star of morning hope above your head, Look up look up and see the rising star The Herald of the day to come, look up. Look forth, look forth across the troubled sea, A bar of trembling light falls quivering Across the waste of waters, shooting down From yon fair star, it lights the hollows up

And silvers all their crests that leap and play. Look round look round on all the brightening world, The earnest of the future world of light: Look round look round the shades and shadows flee.— There are two pasts, the one the past that dies And that thou saw'st in all the Shapes that late Stood up before you from the younger world Into the old to-day, all these have past And gone forever, they are of the past That dies away forever and forever. There are two pasts: the other comes again And all dear Memories follow her, the Ghosts Of the loved long ago take flesh and blood And intertwine their arms and leap for joy And spring to meet forgotten Friends, and things Forgotten but once more recalled. Thy thoughts, All fair thoughts rise again, the baser die And perish; all dear days of innocence. And feelings, fancies, all expressible things, And things that have no language only thought, Arise and live and move and have their being About thee now for ever. Awake, awake, Drink deeply, freely, from the fountain drink, Arise, arise and fear not, stretch thy hand And grasp the hand so ready stretched to thine, Arise and walk. They are all past and gone That thou beheldest, empty shadows, shades Who have fulfilled their days, their strut on Earth Has been accomplished, they too had their end And it is finished, they were shown to thee To show thee what must die, those only die

But thought lives on for ever with the soul. All pure thoughts live: lift up, lift up, behold Thy thoughts about thee, with half-parted lips They stand like children round their Sire to catch His smile and answer him with happy words. All thy fair dreams of love are here, they stand Real as in thy slumbers round about, Fair angel Forms with spotless purity Robed on and clothed, thy creatures all create By thee amid the shades of sleep, now sprung To being and beauty neath the bright sun of day. Behold all those who once were dear, who left . Thy presence for a moment in the past, Gone on before thee, not dead but gone before, And leaving with thee that which called them back To sweet communion by thy side at eve, And dawn of daylight, and when night is still And slumber sets her seal on earth and sea, Who came and whispered to thee of this sphere But were not felt or found but only heard. Bright Band, they here smile on thee, bid thee rise And drink of that fair fountain they have drunk, And bathe in that pure river of life and see With them all things that once were harsh and hard And cold and cramping in the past, now fair, Flooded from fountains of celestial Dawn With the calm clear daylight of Eternity.

Peace swiftly on her silver wings
Swept down and fanned my soul to sleep,

And whispered all the Future brings And all the glad store it doth keep Of happy happy things.—

A dream of an eternal day
O'er fallow fields and fair increase
With Children laughing in their play,
And softer than the softest fleece
Her arms were round me as I lay
Upon the breast of Peace.—

Low hills down rolling to the sea
A summer sea that kissed the sand,
Murmuring from out its soul to me
Upon the bosom of the land
Love vows eternally.—

The sunshine laughing with the corn,
The yellow corn that tossed its head
As it disdained the rosy Dawn
And disbelieved the words he said,
Until his warm smiles killed her scorn
And laughing they were wed.—

The voices ceased as shadows cease to be
And fainter fading paled out one by one:
I woke and heard the slumber of the sea
Neath the broad breast of the high Indian Sun!

MY SOUL.

INTO the dark of the future out from the light of the past Swept my Soul at its birth, the present is burning still, As it is burning yet will it burn to the end of the last Or flame for a little moment to die as a wild flame will.

As a flame from a cloudy mountain thro mist rifts seen afar

That striving to burn up higher sinks lower at each attempt,

Till it dies away in the distance to the light of a single star

And scorns its little self in a hopeless self contempt.

Will it make or mar its moments, grasp chaff or a golden grain,

Will it rise to the highest being that is given man to be, Tasting the honey of sorrow, the Godlike gift of pain, Setting its mind to dive to the depths of the dreamful sea Of Doubts, Desires, and Hopes, vague Longings, and trembling Fears,

Leaving the sands to gather and grasp a Diver's store; Setting its song to the music and march of the myriad years,

Reading the dark of the future by the light of the gone-before;

Dying if need there be with face set hard to the light
Dead on the dull dead field, if the future should find
me so,

That tho the rest be in shadow the face of the corpse be bright,

Victor in Tenebris quam moriturus ero!

I know not what is to come; I have felt and known the past,

And it springs up fresh in my heart like a fountain in the sea;

The future is but the crowd of memories gone remassed,

I have had both sweet and bitter what more than
these can be?

The present I tread it boldly; I laugh when the world laughs fair,

And the grass is green around me and the wind is among the trees,

And nature is happy and smiling, who would not laugh being there

Drowsed in the dreamy daylight by a mellow murmur of bees?

And the head has a heaving pillow that rises and falls like the tide

The dainty delicate motion of the sea asleep in the sun,

And you weave strange forms in fancy on the bosom of your Bride

That throbs to your throbbing temples till brain and bosom are one.

A dream, but a broken dream:—you may work and weary and wear

Your life to a shadow of self in the toil and trouble of life,

But a soulless beast alone in sensual dreams would fare Along the journey of being with only pleasure to wife.

Soul be thou not of these, set some high goal out to gain And struggle against the tides that ever would drag thee down,

There ne'er was Island yet but 'twas circled by the Main You must cross the valley of waters would you wear the conqueror's crown.

Gird yourself to the task, take up your pen and write, Sing the truth from your heart as your heart may hear the song,

Sung by those who have fought and conquered in the fight

Sung as they sing it now in triumph marching along.

Chance you may fail: what of it? others have failed as well:

One is not always Victor but the truth it seems is this, That those who have risen the least will sink to the lowest Hell.

But those who have highest failed have a different bitterness.

Failure is not a failure if it falls in a noble aim

'Tis only a little less than the aim's accomplishment,

If you nobly dared it is better to die in the daring than shame

Your life in a palace polluted and pigsty pleasure misspent.

Thought in her furtherest flight has never fathomed the deep

That calls to the deep above and again to the deep around,

'Till numberless echoes arise like fatherless phantoms to sweep

Thro the halls of the dim Unknown with a sound that is scarce a sound.

What there may be, may be: we know not: who can say? There has been many a flight but never a flight to the end.

Set it our task that each morrow may be a better to-day, We have had much spent upon us and little it is we spend.

ANGELUS

Spirit within me, thou that bidst me rise
Above myself, thou of the starry eyes
With tresses like the gold-spun Western cloud
Flung o'er the sunset Sun,
Whose voice is like the evening wind
Trembling among the trees,
Whose delicate footsteps run
Over the thoughts and visions of the mind
That crowd upon me like the light waves crowd
To kiss the shores of some sweet summer seas,

Spirit that low I hear
Speaking at dawning and at dewy Eve,
Whose voice is soft and musical and clear
When daylight dies in night
And neath the canopy of deepest blue
Earth's voices thro the silent shades arise
Like incense to some splendid temple-roof, and leave
All that is gross below and speed their flight
Till lost to mortal view
They melt into the upper air, like sighs
Breathed by the great Earth-Mother for her child
When she sees nature wronged by man or men
Till her full heart throbs tremulous and agen
Comes the soft sorrow from valley and woodland wild,

O Spirit mighty and mild,
Bear witness I have aye obeyed thy hest!
Yea, I have followed thy directing hand and fed
On the pure food that thou hast deemed the best,
Have walked before thee in all purity,
Humbled myself as tho a little child,
Have plucked the flower that thou hast bid me pluck
Leaving the roadside toadstools rank and red
Upon their sickly stalks, looking to thee
The Mother who hung o'er my infant bed,
As the sweet Mother whose breasts have given me suck.

Spirit, I hear thy voice;
Thou sighest, the Earth is base
This, this is not the place
Where I bid thee rejoice,
And in my empty heart
I feel a longing after more,
A striving back to grasp some gone before,
A hope to reunite some future day
With what it once was part:
From rock to rock, from palm-fringed bay to bay
I wander on and on and all things whisper "Stay,"
But another voice than the seas or the whispering of the trees

I hear which answers "Come, O come away!"

Spirit, away to what— Whither? for it is thine The voice that speaks to me, O whither would'st thou have me turn this heart of mine?

And is this your voice says
"Child, hast thou then forgot
The golden glories of the unspeakable,
The past that once has been the present to thee?
Is your dull memory then so quenchable
That a cold Lethe has rolled o'er the days
When you were one with us, and by my side,
Ere birth-death came upon you slowly to hide
In the cold clay of life the Being that was divine?"

O Spirit clear my eyes
From the dull mists that hang
Heavy around, each year more heavily;
Tho at times thro the fog wreaths
Sweet scenes agone up-rise
With songs that some one sang,
I know not who or when or where
I know not of what time or clime they be
I know not whence the scented air that breathes
Around, I only know that these things are and were.

Spirit, in vain my strife!

O is it vainly that I strive to be

Not of myself to pass away from life

Into the river as it rushes down,

Into the soft wave-world that sighs a "Come away,"

Into the strong-lipped sea,

Into the glories of the new-born day,
Into the tempest lovely in its frown,
Into the breeze that plays Eve's lullaby
O'er the cloud golden harpstrings of the sunset sky?

Spirit of my desire

More dear than earthly love can ever be,

More dear than my self's self, than my life's life,

Than She shown of the past that waiteth yet for me

Who in life's morning dreams thou granted'st mine,

More dear than all save that eternal fire

By Wisdom lighted to burn eternally,

A glory veiled for the present time

In the dull earthly clay that is at strife

With all that would rise from the Earth sublime

Before the throne of the All-wise to shine.—

Spirit most pure and holy give me light,

Dispel the clouds that I may clearly see

In all the present pain and wrong the eternal right!

Spirit whose gentle guidance held me back From all the evils that I have escaped, Whose words were sweet and gentle when I fell Wooing me by forgiveness back to right, Thou who hast ruled my life and shaped My courses in the very clutch of Hell, Out of the Vapours of the nether black That my low being strangely drank Up to the Gates of light, Leave not the World a blank!

Spirit, sweet Spirit, hear,
Leave me not now I need
Thy care more ever than when I was a child,
For now ten times more wild
My pulses and passions beat,
And if thou art not near,—
O Spirit, I sink, I sink,
Stay with me I entreat,
Snatch out the waif, the weed,
I perish on the brink,
The waves pass o'er me, draw me from my grave,
Stretch forth thy hand stretch forth thy hand and save,
O save, O save!

MORITURA.

ALAS and woe is me, there are no days
In which we may not cry "Ah woe is me;"
For every wave that leaps and laughs the sea
Has a dark hollow underneath; all ways
Of man have in them as Lucretius says
Amari aliquid, and that more wise
Stern sad satiric Preacher, who with eyes
That saw beyond the seen, said, "All is vanity."

There is but one way, and I have not yet
Had strength to follow it for all the seen
Has that which draws me back, the forest green
With tender wealth of leaves, the violet
Waif from a world of blue, the bright sunset,
River and ocean, all cry "Revel still
With us and share our joys and griefs," my will
Is powerless to draw me from what all my life has been.

Aye, what has been my life but part of thee
Who art the common mother of us all?
Thy starry eyes, thy tender lights that fall
Upon thy worshipper at night, on me,
Fill up with tears as if to say from thee
We have a night and an eternal sleep,
We may not watch thee, hear thee laugh or weep,
But for a few short years and then we go beyond recall.

"Pan Pan is dead" but a greater than Pan is dying,
Dying day by day altho we see it not:
Why else has every joy we grasp some bitter spot?
Why else should there be night winds full of sighing?
Why voices sad to sadder tones replying?
From out the Temple of things create below
Troop pale-eyed Forms that sob forth, "Woe, woe,
woe,
The mystic songs of life we sang are all forgot."

Nature is weary of herself, her lights

Shine not as long ago, she wildly cries

To that great Power that gave her power to rise
In virgin freshness from long age of nights
To being and beauty midst the highest heights
Of His Creation, take back the life you gave
For I am worn and weary for my grave
And should I see thee come 'twould be with grief-dimmed eyes.

Yea let me die away before thy face

As the winds blow and are not, let me pass
As shadows from a clear lake or a glass,
And let me no more have a name nor place
But be of Thee new breath breathed into space,
O Thou that gave my being unto me
Take back the being that I drew from thee,
Gather unto thyself the dead and withered grass!

O Thou who art me yet art not of me,
Who mad'st, who fill'st, and who art all that are,
Speak and let me be a forgotten Star,
Yet not forgotten for nought is lost to thee,
Thou of time past, thou of eternity,
Thou who in beauty and in gentleness
Hast clothed, who guidest me in mightiness,
Thou who art ever near and yet who art most far,

Be near me now and stay me! What am I,
God, that I should be crying out in prayer,
But that I feel and know that Thou art there
And fain would stay thy Presence passing by
As one in darkness staid Thee, open each eye
Of mine to look Thee fully in the face
And then to die forever into space,
Nay Lord, to live forever and not to die.

I feel I cannot die but gain new birth,
For Thou hast said "I am thy life." My years
Are heavy-lidded, wet and worn with tears
For all the wrongs that they have seen on Earth;
Blood in me leaped and throbbed, eyes laughed in
mirth
When I was young and all my pulses beat
With joy unutterable, as I felt the feet

Of Him who made me: as a Bridegroom cheers

His new made Bride, my Maker blessed me then
And I felt all His love, I feel it now,
Alas alas 'tis bitter to avow,
Did not I bring forth children who were men
And when I looked upon my Lord agen
I looked upon Him nailed and felt His breath
Pass o'er me in the last agony of death,
I looked upon Him pierced and with a thorn crowned
brow.

Sorrow too deep for sorrow 'tis not grief
But it is Death I feel, his hand is laid,
He holds me who is last to die 'tis said,
The last to die the first to bring relief,
And I am shaking like a withered leaf
Yet not with fear of Death, but it is this
Almost beyond belief his great forgivenesses,
I tremble at his grace, Death, what at thee afraid!

Sweep back the cloud O Lord and let me see

That Thou art true and I am poor and vain,

Speak to me Lord those cheering words again,

Pity me Lord who am as nought to Thee,

Spent breath of Thine and this is all of me,

I reel before Thy throne, I tremble, fall,

Breathed thro my being, Lo I am all in all.

Forgiven great God and saved, the Slayer by the Slain!

THE TWO GODDESSES.

NIGHT shed the darkness like down from his wings
As closer he drew them yet over the land,
And the tremulous air was a whisper with things
That fly thither usward in crowds when Night flings
His arms round the neck of the Earth to command
A silence and awe for the greeting he brings
That we feel and confess but can not understand.

It was dark in the east in the west not a star
The night breeze tho coming as yet was unseen,
A single cry came from the woodlands afar
Low weary and eerie, a lonely Nightjar
Wailed out to the silence then ceased as't had been
Profaning the temple it dwelt in; the bar
Of the blue burnished heaven now shone with its queen.

Not alone but attended she came, the bright rays
Of her sister-slaves started in groups from the Blue,
And away to the Eastward the birthplace of days
That have been and will be till there are no days
Where cut by the mountain the silver shone thro,
A cloud with the Moon on her breast rose, ablaze
With the splendour it brought till it vanished from view.

And only Diana and Venus were there

The one pure and cold and the other more warm;
Yes, only Astarte with diamonded hair,
And Dian, her crescent that lighted the bare
Dewy splendour of shoulders, the splendour of form,
That now for her second Endymion were
A guide thro the darkness a light thro the storm.

And swiftly they sped from their thrones in the sky
And lighted by me on the crest of the hill,
And each turned upon me the fire of her eye:
Then Venus laughed low as she said "You and I,"
Tho Dian stood by me and claimed my best will
My heart turned to Venus, tho vain I did try
To rest all on Dian as vain I strive still.

"Take my hand look on me raise thyself to my height Give me all thy heart who would give thee all mine, And thou shalt be day god I Queen of thy night, Thy ruling tho lesser and following light, Thy Guide and thy Guardian, tho each wish of thine Will be for my doing a love and delight, Ah leave her for me who alone am divine!"

I fain would have sprung to her side, but soft sighs
Struck my ear and I turned, listened, looked, as before
I was held by the flame in Astarte's bright eyes
And a murmur half heard of all sweetest replies
Stole thro me long loved, and now heard more and
more

Came the music of memory tuned to sweet cries It is vain, it is vain, O the struggle, give o'er! Is it vain sweetest Dian, alas is it vain?

Am I hers then so wholly I cannot break free?

What profit sweet Venus, what profit or gain

Do you find in thus keeping me bound by a chain

That is firmer and stronger and mightier than me?

Am I then to be ever a slave to your reign,

Yea, bound as a bond-slave for ever to thee?

Thereat she smiled sweetly so sweet that I sank
At her feet in a love-dream and Dian in scorn
Smiled also and vanished. I lay on a bank
Bowered in violet and moss-rose and greedily drank
The honey of Venus, till love was o'er worn
And wearied I slept on her bosom—and shrank
To awake and find o'er me the broad-breasted Morn!

BACK, BACK!

I RODE on steady thro the world
But a hand was laid on my bridle rein,
I set my teeth to keep my course
But a voice I could not void nor force
Cried out, "Sir Knight, turn back again
From riding thro the world in vain.

Back to the morning of your life

Turn back turn back your bridle rein."

I yielded to the voice that cried,

To the formless Form beside my side,

And wandered wildly back again

Found all my ride thro life in vain.

Huge lakes and trees and dreamy halls,
And drifting Shapes, and smoking rain:

And I am not the only one
Who ere his life was well begun
Has been forced sadly back again
To search the olden halls in vain.

From sleep to waking on the deep Of Life, then dreams; again a sleep.

SO IN LIFE IN DEATH.

VAIN heart, why beatest thou? the World is free,
Your choosing may not be the choice of her
Your chosen Goddess, for the worshipper
Is often looked upon unpityingly,
If such poor pittance be thy fate's decree—
Fond Fool, turn from her who would make thy life
More sad than sorrow, get thee to a Wife
Who counts a Husband not by gold or fur,
Who holds him not at what his wealth may be.

As t' one that makes sweet music to a lyre

With pleasing voice and well can strike the chords,
Perchance she listens to your happy words

And for a moment all her soul takes fire

Shot thro with a new sense and strange desire

For something more than gold or place can give,
But ere the flush of hope hath time to live
A spell upon her cheek, the World affords

Some shaft to strike to Earth what would aspire.

As one that listens for the birds of Dawn But vainly listens till the night be spent, She listens but hears not the instrument For higher nature in her is not born, And with a heart weary and over worn
She turns again into the whirling throng,
And sets her lips to smile and speeds along,
But feels her life to all is vainly lent
For loss of something that she seemed to scorn.

Sad Spirits that feel the ache, but why it is

Know never! Happy is the pair to whom

One clear note struck out from the common gloom

Wraps both their souls in extacy of bliss

And one life-oneness, they will never miss

All the World's petty necessary parts,

Nought steps between the beating of their hearts,

And when Death comes for a new bridal-room

They leave Earth, and for Heaven's experiences.

ONLY ONE AND ONCE.

I LOVE all Women for the sake of one
That is all Woman, as the stars and sun
Draw to themselves the sweetest influences
And subtle virtues out of herbs and trees,
So she draws forth from all that come to her
A hidden holiness in the worshipper,
A dream extatic of some fair past light
Such as is breathed by the soft south wind
Betwixt the dead day and the birth of night,
A gentle whisper to the o'erladen mind,
And all good Women have such powers as these.

The Woman heart holds in it more than men May dream of; happiness may spring agen When once that more is given, but not life; There always is a discord and a strife Jarring among the chords healed up too soon And set not sweet to music, out of tune Slightly they may be, but yet ever so

They will respond unto the lyrist's touch:

I feel it in my heart and truly know

She who loves more than once hath loved too much, Only to one can woman cry, "Your wife!"

She hath his love, she hath her children round:—
Tho I have ocean, Earth and air, a sound
Swells up so sadly from the solemn sea,
I have missed something, it hath passed from me,
Thus doth it ever murmur in the night;
Then comes the Phantom of an old delight
Wronged by my present being, and it sings

A low sweet song whose name is, Might have been, Full of remembered and forgotten things,
And full of what was but is now unseen:
O Voice O Voice what is the soul of thee!

She hath a future full of happiness,
And I have mine the which I know will bless
This being with birth of brighter things than now
In some far dawning day, and I would bow
Content to what I know, but cannot bend
Myself and turn away; tho fate might send
Me all the future as a book to read
I'd know the fairest volume closely sealed,

And vainly for some Angel I might plead

To read the lines that have not been revealed:

O Life, O Past, nay tell me what art thou?

A MIDNIGHT VISION.

NIGHT and the River: a line of lamps
Dim thro the fog and the London damps:
A tall Policeman who moodily tramps
On his beat to keep off the cold and cramps.

Some one late going home from the Play; See, his white shirt-front as he looms this way, Murdering some favourite air of the day; I pity the mangled roundelay.

Two waggons of fruit Covent Garden bound:— A shriek from the early Underground, As it pierces the air that is still around Save for yesterday's dying sound.

Over St. Paul's a falling star
From between where the Wain and the Pleiads are:—
The rattle of wheels from a distant car:
A Drunkard's laughter borne from afar.

The dew-drops pale on the parapet:

A woman shivering cold and wet;

A plash in the river below:—forget

If you can the silence that followed, I seem to hear it yet!

DOUBLE IDENTITY.

The following story, simple and eventless, has sprung into existence most spontaneously. As far as I know I have never read any tale like it, tho I suppose there are many similar to be found. In me it arises and originates from my own experience—well, perhaps the disordered imaginings of a sickly fancy, but for all that, to myself at least, real enough,—that we are two, and even while yet on this mortal Sphere, separable.

On this thought is engrafted the other, that, until Death joins proper and particular Beings in Eternal Oneness, they wander the world capable of a double and identical communion each with each, soul meeting soul in the sometime abandonment of the flesh.

This duality reads no doubt ridiculous; but there are so many unexplainable things among men, so many superstitions that must have some foundation of sense, that he who would laugh them down, if he be wise, will only smile and he who would only smile as he passes them by, will, if he be wiser, consider carefully his own consciousness of the Supernatural, and whether men of all times are to be set down as Fools, or Liars, or both, who, without being idealistic, without the power of conferring or holding communication with other and common thought, have been smitten with the same strange identity of kindred idea.

The chivalrous Stewart singer Atyown has touched upon the subject in one of his Poems drawn from ancient source, and adds a note upon the same in his Appendices.

These verses are on paper as they came to me; they have been to me a pleasure in the re-reading, and I hope that if ever read by another they will not be altogether harsh and painful. If one passage, nay, one line brings to any a closer realization of the beautiful nature that is about us, I shall be amply rewarded. As a Minister must feel when he has touched some heart, or given some keen-shafted significance to a text that before was but a vain and commonplace repetition in the mouth of man, so will I feel, if any I know be brought to a nearer and dearer sympathy of thought with her who is all sympathy, and ever responsive to the slightest feelings of her children, our grand and universal Mother Nature!

DOUBLE IDENTITY.

Love wert thou only of this Earth, ah me,
What would the worth of this world's loving be
If there was naught beyond? There are who hold
Love may be interchanged and bought and sold;
This but delays existence, things are twain
Only till they become as one again:
All things were one at first and ever make
Back for that oneness; this the deity
And that eternal all souls strive for: take
My Tale, perchance you may the meaning see!

We have but one mate waiting in the world One other half to make, fulfil our own. In every perfect human life must meet Two perfect human lives, distinct and same, Divisible indivisible, two and one, From that far first created strong and sweet, The bow the cord, the music and the words, Alike unlike, one flesh yet other flesh, To meet grow one and at the end of days Give back their Maker his completed whole.

The soft sea laid her face upon the shore, On the broad bosom of the shore, and slept In silent still, save when the happy dreams Broke out in smiles about her lips, her spouse Sent forth his arms and held her to his breast Till he too swooned away and sunk in sleep And all was quiet; on the brown-browed rocks The Scarts and Sea-fowl sat and seemed to sleep Save for one watchful eye that ever peered Upon the surf beneath; anon a splash, A flap of wings, and all again was still.— The shadows and the sunbeams ceased to play Upon the uplands, thro the moveless boughs No light rays darted, the blithe breeze was asleep And woke no soft sigh from the trembling tongues Of willow tree or aspen, over all The noonday waved her wand and said "Be still:" And so they slumbered hour by hour, till when

Struck from her sleep with sudden burst of song All nature wakened to the cool of day.

Down moving from the oakwoods, half withdrawn From the salt spray, sheltering a velvet lawn And nooks of fern and moss, nestling afar Beneath the hills that met the morning star, Two Children passed together; the warm South wind Fed their young lips, their hair together twined, As they moved shorewards from the grass-green land And sought the yellow braid of shelly sand, Sat for a moment, then playing chased the waves That strove to kiss their feet like willing slaves: Then made up higher and above the seas Built their twin towers and tiny palaces, Until a bubbling surf that larger boiled Would sweep them down, and then they laughed and toiled In childish labour, some new palace rose Shingled with shells and guarded round with rows Of razor fish, garrisoned by unwilling stock Of captive crabs and crawfish from the rock,— A little scream of laughter and half fear,— A swish upon the sand,—the fort,—O dear,— With all its forces gone most willingly, Ungrateful creatures, back into the Sea. Poor Sea, so scolded! then they ran and played Merman and Mermaid in and out the shade Of the tall cliffs, acting the stories old On winter nights by cord-veined Hubert told, Of Princess and of Prince in wondrous dresses Who married other Princes and Princesses

That lived below the sea. O how they loved The great soft sea with dulce and tangle groved, And the dumb fishes that like birds would go Darting thro the brown tree boughs down below! O how they loved it tho it spoilt their play! And then grown tired they watched the parting day, The setting Sun growing larger, larger till It sank from sight and all the shores grew still In the last light, and they were found and went With Hubert from the shore in wonderment, And joined their train that waited them afar Beneath the hill upon whose crest one star Shone like a sapphire. Long leagues up the land Did the Girl's parents' gracious mansion stand, But the Boy's Halls their present home to be Stood on a breezy upland nigh the sea. Her Sire and Mother stayed with his, and so With mingled retinue they wound up slow Together to the Castle thro the wood In the first still of twilight solitude.

Here for a while, her Parents foreign sent
Upon some Embassy, the daughter spent
With those that loved her for her own, a maze
Tho few in years of honey laden days
From infancy to girlhood, and the boy
Grew up before her by two years; their joy
In all things common as they had begun,
Their higher yearnings from their childhood one
Now mixed for ever in that oneness grew;
No hurt one felt but that the other knew,
No hope, no sorrow, ever hand in hand

They walked the woods and climbed the cliffs to stand Watching the sad sea that o'er all endures, Or sought the sedgy shingle of the lake, or moved Like fancied Fairies o'er the mountain moors: Plucked the same flowers, heard the same bird they loved. Stood in the soft spray of the waterfalls And spoke each other's thoughts, and heard the calls Of voiceless questioning each to each, and drew The selfsame loveliness from each drop of dew, The selfsame beauty from each buoyant bell Faint with its sweetness at the dear day's close, Drew the same odours from each folded rose, Heard the same elf-notes on the breezes swell And every thing of Earth their soul-communion tell. They choose two stars and as they watched them saw Their rays together mingle, melt, and draw Each to the other, till they were no more two . But one fair Sphere that shone with lustre new.— So they grew up from youth to riper age. And all who saw them read the open page Of their young hearts: as Sister yet and Brother They lived this life only for one and other; And ere the full glow of the early flame They both were parted; for her Father came Back from his foreign honours, and once more Her Parents smiled upon her, tho they saw Not now the Babe that played about their knees But a girl fairer than the Princesses Old Legends tell of; perfect in each grace And O the Angel smiling thro her face! He, the slim stripling they had left a child,

With every youthful beauty reconciled To build his fair frame faultless: such a pair Were worthy well to be their long line's heir, And merged in one their Principalities To found a Kingdom by those Northern seas. So thought her Parents, so his Parents thought, Who distant kindred but near friends, had brought Their mutual fellowship to be a name Thro all that region of undying fame. His was a mighty House that foremost stood Ages agone in annals writ with blood, Linked in all bonds with hers; in after years Famous in peace their ancestry appears Of spotless honour, and the kingdom's Head Had held them nearest to his board and bed. His guard in war, now in more peaceful aims The noblest of his mighty Nobles' names.—

Far thro their wide Domains the message went Of their betrothal and their sires' intent, That many a barrel broached to hail the glad event. 'Twas done and solemnly their fates were vowed Together to be wrought if Fate allowed, And all the meetings and the revelry, The assembled kinsmen, guests of high degree, Nobles and Thanes were gone, and all again Was as before. 'Twas a soft day of rain But it had ceased, the sun shone out and fair The green leaves sparkled, and the mellow air Full of the sweet smell of the Earth blew free And mingled with the salt smell of the sea. They passed together down the shore and stood

As oft before, but now the solitude Brought more into their hearts, their arms were twined Together and the warm breath of the wind Blew her sweet hair about his neck, as she Drew back the tangled tresses laughingly Their eyes met for an instant and a kiss Came after, never such an one as this, A thousand times their lips had met before But for this one they thought on them no more. A long long kiss—Sister hereto and Brother They had been, now no more, each felt the other Was all in all: no blush or shyness past Over their cheeks; it came to them at last And naturally as to Earth first fair Love.— They passed on silent and the stars above Seemed fuller far of brightness than they were: A grander grace seemed glowing over her, He stept more proudly. Earth, air, skies and seas Had yielded to them all their mysteries. So long so long and they had known it not, Or had they known it once, and but forgot Their knowledge for a while? They could not tell; Such thought was theirs, and tho invisible Each saw the other's thought and answered it By their hearts' silence. The stars watched them sit, No longer children, by the sea they loved Until they rose and happy homewards moved. But yet their joy was wordless: life begun Together, now no longer twain but one, One soul, one being, erst they passed side by side Thro life, but now they were identified

And made one flesh and spirit: so I hold
So will you take it when my tale is told.
Swift flew the happy days, each hour they drank
Love deeper, deeper, from the moment shrank
That told their parting, for their Parents said
Long years must pass before that they could wed,
And they must part, 'twas best: the Elders knew,
They too had loved, that which was right to do.
And so she went first to her home, and then
Away among the busy courts of men
South with her Parents on their Embassy,
And he lived in the castle by the sea.—

Two years had passed: one night his Father rose And looking out across the orchard blows Of garden flowers and hedges, saw his son Move with a maiden through them, one by one They sought old places there together—she! 'Twas her he deemed away in Italy, His boy's Betrothed, here wandering in the night. He ran to seek them but they passed from sight. He sought the chamber of his child, and there Upon his couch in slumber deathful fair Colder than life he lay, the blue veins stood Pulseless and still, from his cheeks the warm blood Was past away and in an agony The Father gazed: a soft wind murmured by And his eyes opened and his son rose up And stretched his hand and clasped a crystal cup Full of clear water, drank, and standing near Beheld his Father from whose face the fear Was not yet faded, and went up and laid

His head upon his shoulder strong and said, "What is it Father? I have dreamed I walked With Nerva thro our flowers as once, and talked Of dear times drawing near for both of us, And of our meeting strange and marvellous, When I felt called away, I kissed her: went: I woke: it was a dream: and I saw bent Your eyes upon me sadly." "O my son" Was all the Father said, "God grant it one! A dream no more!" The morning came apace And smote with light the towers about the place And brought broad day with blessing on its wings: They parted, and his soul with many things The Father sorely tried. Eric his child His own, his well-beloved, what curses wild Were come to pass upon him. On that day Had letters come from Nerva far away To her betrothed and loved: along with this Missives and messages from her sire to his Full of strange import. How he oft had seen Eric in Italy with his daughter; lean To this side or to that he could not find Any solution to it in his mind:-His child said nothing; he had asked her,—well She had been dreaming and her dreams would tell How she met Eric, but her dreams were vain So faintly to her mind recalled again.— One thing she knew, they had changed rings and there His ring was shining on her finger fair, Guarded and kept by one of hers above: The other she had given unto her Love

And hung about his neck twined with her hair. His Father looked, he found it hanging there Nor further read: - His son was standing by, And looking, so it seemed, on vacancy Called out on Nerva and passed from the room; His Father watched him past the storied tomb Of old Sir Ivan, then he went from sight And on the wall a sudden burst of light Fell from the blinking sunshine thro the trees. The Sire resumed and stranger mysteries The letter told of: how the daughter grew Deathlike and still at times, beneath his view Pulseless and motionless: and when again She would return from this strange slumber, vain She strove with recollection: said she wist Not what had been; saw but a silver mist Swim up before her and her memory: But they were happy dreams; she felt that she Had been with Eric; how or where she knew No more than he, her Sire; the power grew So strong upon her, that to see her there Lying before him cold and marble fair, He feared the future, lest her parted breath Should be cut off ere its return by death: What strange Enchantment; was it Eric, he That caused this wonder? in an agony The Father sought him and implored him cease But for three years, and leave his child in peace; Tho she were happy, who could tell the charm Might not be evil, working deathful harm? His daughter he would take to all the Courts

And Kings of Europe, and the loved resorts Of fashion and folly; set all men to win Her heart from Eric; in the whirl and din Of newness she might all forget the past, And the strong spells that he had formed and cast Upon her fall away; and he implored That Eric too should be sent far abroad, If haply that some fair Dame that he saw In foreign climes the spell away might draw With the Enchanter. The boy he loved well And dearly, but he feared some miracle Had risen to smite their children's hopes in twain; He feared that their own wishes were in vain Thro some strange fate: he knew not what but still A voice rang in his ears, invisible Of origin, but ever crying "Woe If those you love are joined here below, Thereafter thev will pale and pass away As clouds mix, mingle, and vanish at the close of day." So wrote his Friend and straight the Sire replied.— "O other Heart, I read your thought and died The heart within me; for my child as thine Lies neath the same affliction; their fates twine Identical, our children's; oft my Son Lies in the trances that you write of, won Away from gentle sleep by some strange power; I saw your Daughter with him in the bower Of roses twined beneath our Eastern tower. I sought his chamber; dead, not in repose, His body lay, but as I looked he rose Again and knew me but knew not his trance,

No wizard he, but some weird influence Clings like a shadow to our children. Have heard strange things and know not if to cry In answer to his wisdom, yea or nay, Our learned Priest. Such wild tales doth he say Have been and are: my son he sees, and cries Over our children and their destinies, I know not what! But peradventure new Scenes, thoughts, and passions brought before his view May shift this sorrow from our son. I deem Travel may chance to dissipate the dream, If dream it be, and so will send him forth Duly companioned from this iron North To taste the soft and sweet of Southern lands .-He has returned and near me now he stands, His eyes love-lighted as he reads the scroll Sent by his Lady, our Daughter. Silk bound roll How much of destiny you bear! And now He answers loud he will be with her, how I know not, so he speaks; then questioned I, He turning spoke but half unconsciously, Nor thought I spoke. 'Tis strange, but I conclude 'Twas some deep working of silence and solitude Wrought out in utterance. All things shall be done As you deem best, and foreign fares my son."— But now strange rumours vague and wonderful Spread thro the towers beneath his Father's rule Of his mad malady, and all men bore A different version of what no man saw, Or knew to speak on: some cried the boy was mad And reasonless, but no great grounds they had,

For if they met him or on holl or lea He was as sane as sanest man could be: Some said 'twas others' thought and talking folly That struck his early youth with melancholy: This, that, all things canvassed the babbling crew, And queer conjectures monthly mustered flew From tongue to toilsome tongue: some with long face, Wiseacres, said, "A Lady in the case," And saying this they might as well have cried "He is alive because he has not died!" 'Twas the old scene and thoughts so others said That hung around his sense and slumber-led Grew masterful of self, and drew his soul Forth from himself, and as unto the pole The magnet turns, so ever he turned to her As to his chosen turns the Worshipper. "There are strange things and wonderful in man" Struck in the old Physician, and began Of Hypnos—Cataleptics—and such ills; Felt pulse, prescribed, until the feeble rills Of knowledge faded in uncertainty And baffled yielded place: and Hubert strove With his young Lord, his first dear charge and love, But he made nothing, only heard at times The stripling singing to himself, and chimes Of other music mingled with his own, And saw him wandering by the shore alone And holding converse with some one unseen, So strove to win from him where he had been: But the Boy only answered pettishly, " I do not know of what you talk to me"-

Till lastly spoke the old man marvellous The Ancient Pastor of that noble House, A learned man, whose age and purity Were deep and awful as the solemn sea. Read in all lore and all the legends old That Time has in a robe of mystery rolled, Bow'd with the weight of wisdom more than years, Written across with thoughts and holy fears His brow was networked with a thousand lines And channelled thro with labour in the mines And depths of knowledge, and his eyes that turned Mildly on all men here were weary worn, And show'd the soul, and told the lamp that burned And saw the stars of eve saluted those of morn. Him the Boy loved next to his Sire, and he Answered his questioning impartially, And freer than his Father could have heard. For Father aye is Father, and his word However dear has law mixed with its love, And comes as 'twere from some far God above And not from fellow; and such Beings are we Our lips are less tied to equality. Aye, if we had the power we would confess More to base fellow than to the spotlessness Of our Creator. He is so grand, so far, And we so low, so vile, so filthy are. Hence then the wonder of an earthly Christ No other plea or plan would have sufficed: We fall before his feet in agony Crying, "O Thou who wert a Man have pity on me!"... To the good Pastor all he felt or knew

The Boy confessed, and by degrees he drew All his thought from him. How at times he lay Drowsed and dreamful and then passed away He knew not where: but a vague thought of joy Of meeting sweet and fellowship, no cloy Nor shade fell on that sunshine; he could guess These dreams and visions, that they not meetingless Came for himself and for his Lady dear; She had the same and in her letters clear Appointment made; he sunk him in the trance And straight they met, he knew each circumstance But could not speak it for the thought withdrew From uttered expression: that these things were true He show'd her ring upon his neck, he said That they were one, he felt tho sundered To part them were in vain, from any land If they so willed it walking hand in hand They met here once more: that they did belong Each to the other and a Power more strong Than mortal ruled them. What or how or where He knew not, only felt that it was there. All this the Pastor gained in utterances Broken and strange, not ordered here as these Written continuous, but in answering To his kind speech and gentle questioning. Until at last, "I know not what you seek," The Boy burst out, "and all the things I speak The more I strive to utter fade away Past and forgotten, and the thick mists play Over my thoughts all fanciful you ween. But something whispers that they must have been!"***

I too who write this Tale have known and thought These very thoughts too fanciful, and taught But few or none my feelings. I have grown Out of myself: in this am I alone?— Aye, I have felt it, but cannot explain The scarce well known; my soul seeks back in vain For answer to the cry, what art thou here? All things are darkly seen and nothing clear; I cannot write it, but I feel that I Am not the only Being that do lie Under its wildering wings mysterious That make as 'twere a plaything here of us: I know that many feel it, but they dare Not write the knowledge that they equal share Lest men should cry, "Lo madmen," thro the world, And look down on them with a lip upcurled In scornful pity. Men are merciful, You think not with them and you are a fool. So ever; be it so: but those who feel As I, may here see kindred thought reveal. I am projected from this present being Into some other, more than mortal seeing; Sometimes an instant brings it, at a word, A woodland whisper, or a far off bird Challenging song amongst the singers, then A touch, a picture, takes me off from men, And I see what I know not cannot say For with return most memory fades away, Save of dim worlds and undefinable things And the soft air fanned faintly by large wings That fade away from thought when it returns

To consciousness, and with high emprise burns To explore the inexplorable and pass Where Monarch Thought sits all discrowned, alas! Where, whence O soul? There comes an answer back: I have returned down from a traceless track Blindfold and baffled: four times ere my years Had reached two decades, to such strange shore steers My Spirit, that incredible it seems,— More deep than Life of stronger sense than dreams. I powerless lay, from my limbs gradually And slowly passed off their vitality: I could not move, I had no wish to cry And then, so strange, that I must seem to lie To most men reading, swooning not but still Shifting its case, my Spirit passed at will Away, away; and wandered as a child Turned aimlessly into a garden, wild With grand luxuriance, creepers, flowers, and trees In rich profusion. On the golden leas Great grasses, canes and ferns and tangled moss, Rich webs that stretch and birds that flit across Brilliant and beautiful, as if the skies Had lent their wings the glory of their dyes, Made them more glorious; luscious on stalk and stem Hung all the East's fruitage; with each a diadem The tall palms crowned and queenlike kissed the air Or ere the sweet breeze kissed another there. All was so strange, northern and tropical Mixed in the garden, the clime suited all: And pines and palms grew sisterlike and brother And oaks and forest giants busked each other,

And weeping willows, teeming tulip trees, And laurustines, slim silver veverleys, Their fair forms mingled faultless: on the streams Lotuses lav, like beauties, in their dreams Smiling the summer sun away from life To deathful love; and all the banks were rife With violets, wood anemones, and sweet With jessamine flowers: like living jewels fleet From flower to flower the humming-birds surprise Their rivals, the hawk-moths and butterflies.— The ceaseless crickets called, and from the trees The shrill cicalas sang their cadences, And the warm breath of spring and autumn mixed Blew thro the branches, and swept up betwixt The stately stems and treeferns. I would fain Have drank for ever that warm wine: again I was drawn back a sense of distance crept Upon me, then I felt that I had swept Thro leagues and centuries; I was back, it lay Before me on the couch the case of clay, I loathed it, lifeless thing, but still it rose, About me powerless its cold arms close, And we were one again. A gasp, a cry, A sense of slumber, loss of memory, And slowly thro my limbs the current ran With life and power, among the sons of man I moved once more—a vague and dreary thought Of what I've writ, no more my Spirit brought Back from its voyage: but my memory strove Back ever as to picture those we love Our Spirit strives. Now four times have I past

Away from self, and four times have I cast This cloak away, but ever have returned With sad soul knowing not the what it yearned, But yearning ever. It has met and seen Yet dares not know, or knows not what has been, What meetings, what acquaintance, what delight, * * * Of all things but what comes within their sight Men are intolerant: what another feels Is only felt in that the thought reveals Some thought or feeling that the other—well So be it: what I've felt I can but tell. May be 'twill catch some eye that sees the same, Some one who fellowship in thought may claim, And I have writ not vainly. O tis strange That in this world of constant interchange I have not met this. Men have sung before Of Intimations, this is something more. A twi-existence if such thing may be, A double meaning given to I and me, And so being two, the one may lie at home, The other meet with kindred thought and roam Awhile together, but chained to the first Bound to return and be again as erst A deep drear Lethe of forgetfulness It drinks unwilling lest the Soul distress The Body with vain thoughts, where all things seem Only the fugitive fancies of a dream, Strange and unstable that cannot recall What has been, Ever as the Eve doth fall Or some sweet scent of some familiar flower Comes breeze-blown from the petals, the nounday hour, The still of midday and the birds of dawn
All show the past, but ere the thought is born
It dies away: it has been and we saw
Its glories once we know, but know them now no more!

So Eric left his home, in foreign climes Awhile to wander, and the castle chimes Rung out a parting to their future Lord As he passed from them musing how abroad He might meet Nerva. And in memory His broad domains left far behind the sea That rose twixt him and them still saw he, yet Stood on the rocks and view'd the large Sun set Westward in gold, broad blazoning the wave With or on azure; shining thro the cave That like an eye the needle pointed ness Pierced thro and thro, and let the tide escape Short cut and saved the doubling of the cape. The tall cliffs rose again before his eye With all their ebon black and tracery Of crowning boulders, the low rocks that thrust Their broad backs thro the waves, cased in a crust Of barnacles and limpets, where the Darts Dashed swiftly round and all the solemn Scarts Met for their evening clack and converse: far Across the cliffs kissing the evening star Rose rounded hills and rolling downs between And rifted ridges clothed in emerald green Specked o'er with sheep, and where the stone dykes raised Their long brown lines saw where the cattle grazed. And knew the springs along the sloping shore Where the rock-fowl and doves as day drew o'er

Would fly and feed: and the deep caves the tide Would leave half dry, save where with room to glide Down the mid-channel the soft seals would go With quaint eyes looking one, and to and fro Wagging their heads; and the long lines at sea Where in great armies meeting playfully The herrings flashed under the flapping wings Of gulls and terns, while all the water rings With shrieks and squabbles: looking from the main On to the silent evening land again He marked the oakwoods in the vales withdrawn, The purple wold, the soft and velvet lawn, And far, so far no wind their branches stirs, The gloomy green of twilight-mantled firs; And nearer rising the tall towers and walls He called his Home: the noise of waterfalls Fell on his ear, he saw the shaken trees Tremble in the embraces of the breeze: All that had made his years a long delight He saw before him: sudden from his sight The vision passed away and all again was night. The spell was gone and he heard only now The sad waves lipping at the pointed prow, And round him all the silence of the sea. Ah, not till then he felt how bitterly The wild word parting filled its chalice up, And all the bitterness in the drained cup. But days flew by and bringing with them change In thought and interest as the wider range Of lands drew out before him: only read Before in books, but held and worshipped

As holy places. All the Old displayed New beauties in their fellowship and stayed His wandering feet, and France and Italy He traversed as one sails the summer sea Basking in full delight: but 'twas a joy That only for a moment had no cloy, For quick it passes and the undertone Of unseen sorrow holds you all its own. Thence passed he to the East.—O diamond Morn Of rising East! O Land where I was born! O sunny South! O sweet lands of the East. Where all that is of beauty has so increased From the creation, that with very delight Nature is surfeited and weary! Night, Dark solemn Night set round with swarming stars. Spanned o'er and girdled with the lustrous bars, Thy maiden-zone, the peerless milky-way! O Moonlight, rivalling the light of day, Warm, passionate, and loveable, thine no play Of cold and clear cut beams, thine 'tis to lie On the broad breast of Earth in extacy, The Mistress with her Lover! O still hours Before the dawning, full of mystic powers And strange spells haunting us, the lips of Love Are nearest to the Earth then, and we move In that sweet silence as in Paradise Under the breath and neath the very eyes Of God! O Dawning broad and barred with gold! The early songs and old Earth's incense rolled Upwards to greet the deity of day: The morning mists that rise and roll away.—

Then leaving the soft embraces of the sea With one grand bound like Samson breaking free The bonds and withies of his Mistress' state, Who clings around and holds him passionate With silver arms and bosom, over us A very Godhead rises glorious. The first fierce rising, then the statelier course Of self assured and law determined force, The joy of morning on the world. The flowers Drink its delights till later midday hours Sink slumberful upon the trees and streams: When comes the solemn noon, the time of dreams, Even the shadows still and motionless Toss not a tassel nor one delicate tress Of fern or cane or creeper; all is still · And nature slumbers, save the Invisible That evident moves a worship thro the woods, A silent Psalm from all the solitudes Of fell and forest. Now the shadows fall More east: the singing of the waterfall Wakes up one bird to rival song, the grass Trembles an instant as the breezes pass Still silent thro it; sudden to the ground A large pod loosened falls, and at the sound The brooding dove starts, settles, and her low Sweet voice makes all the branches overflow With love about her nest; a sudden whirr Of wings, a grass quail rises; after her The bell-bird breaks the silence, at the cry All seem to wake and answer "Here am I." And all the leafage and the woody ways

Ring out with music joy and love and praise.— So steal the hours: the birds cease one by one, A hornbill screams out hoarsely, stops, is done; You hear his sweep of wings, he strides away As the hurried off to catch the day Now sinking shoreward: gleaming thro you tree The silent silver sunset stretching sea Lies like a sword along the line of sight, Like an Excalibur flung wearily By some tired Titan from him in his flight Far Westward to the chambers of the night. The Sun himself is gone, the after-glow Burns thro the leaves and purples o'er the hills, Then dies away into a paler flow Of sleepy sunshine o'er the terraces. And like a spring from cliff-rent crevices Light trickles down the rock in living rills Of gold and silver, or lies like blades of corn Scattered around, and weary and outworn Day dies,—but night comes not, there is a space Between where neither day nor night have place Full of strange sounds, and like a Gleaner she Gathers the last lights home across the sea, Drawing night down; who with her tender eyes, All-Mother, watches o'er the Paradise Sleeping babe-like beneath her. O sweet South Accept my worship! Thou whose warm red mouth Has pressed my brow! O Mother can it be This my heart-reverence is Idolatry?

To Eric other thoughts, but still the green More emerald than the emerald in its sheen, The plains and palms, the summer still that lay Upon the broad land, and the thought that day Here first saw Earth, the temples old and gray, The hoary creeds, the sacred streams and lakes, The mighty forests and the tangled brakes Of cane and cactus, birds and butterflies More brilliant than his lands, the myriad eyes Of night, so new and yet so old, he met Like Friends in foreign lands whose lids are wet With thoughts of home and common memories. And his old loves the shoreward surging seas All wrought their work within his heart; and then As he passed Northwards among freer men, The mighty mountains drew a worship forth And wonder from this nursling of the North. His own he thought them marvellous, but these Would bear his whole hills on their terraces. Nor feel the burden. Far he moved and wide But only to feel more unsatisfied: For the eye is not filled with seeing. He felt it was not, as he could not grow Into and be a part with nature, he Turned back his thoughts that had lived languidly Stifled by change of late, and Nerva's face Grew more than all the wonders of the place. And the old ways drew back again to him, He felt the mystic life within each limb Fail, faint away, he passed into that trance Of which he knew but from scarce evidence He moved with Nerva. Hubert, who here abroad Was sent, with others companying his young Lord, Saw sorrowful the change, and strove in vain To turn his thoughts to other things again.—

Meanwhile thro all the Courts and Palaces Had Nerva passed, but cared for nought of these. Her Father's daughter, beautiful and young And rich and great, a thousand lips had sung A fickle heart away on many a soft-tuned tongue. But she had none to give, Eric alone Held hers as his, and his she held her own. They were betrothed and more, she told her Sire, Pledged to each other, and a sudden fire Would light her eyes. She hated each new home And to the dear north seas her thought would roam Again with Eric. Masque and festival Were view'd with scorn, and scornfully thro all She took her part. *One night the full orbed moon Fell on her balcony: she stood there silent, soon She felt the old feeling. Eric by her side: They stood together; from the casemate wide The glow fell on them, like a glory there Moonlight and firelight mingled on their hair. Still radiance and warm passion. Down below About the avenues as the Guests did go They marked them standing in the light, so grand They looked and noble, that some other land The gazers thought had given the pair to earth. Heedless of all the passing strains of mirth And talk and jest. Her Father came, saw. Straight Entering the mansion by a wicket gate He hastened to her chamber, on her bed Cold marble still she lay and seemed as dead,

Pulseless and pure; he gained the window, there
Saw them awhile, and then the empty air,
And turning back into the shadowy room
Beheld his Daughter rising thro the gloom
And drawing near; upon his brow she laid
Her warm lips gently, "Father dear," she said,
"I dreamed of Eric when I felt you pass
Across my chamber and I rose, alas,
What is it Father that you look so sad?
What cause of sorrow? What news have you had
That makes you grieve?" "My Daughter nought"
replied

Her Sire astonished, as he passed aside Her questioning. "I only came to see Something I marked upon the Balcony And found you sleeping. Angels watch thy sleep! Thine are strange slumbers: you would seem to leap Sudden from life to death! But Child good night; All fair things keep thee thro the dark in sight!" He gently kissed her brow and passed away, . But many musings had he from that day, And food for musing. Stranger now she grew And all her life but from these meetings drew. They were her food her solace and delight, The in her common hours she had no sight Of what she saw or met in them: at times She deemed she wandered far thro foreign climes Always with Eric; thro worlds undefined And vague and without fixed place in her mind Ending in dreamless slumber. She would call This dreamland state meeting Eric, and fall

Now at her will into them, for of yore They came upon her will-lessly and bore Her off from being: but now at her will They came and went and grew on her, until Her whole life seemed a dream. And in despair Her Father saw them an united pair No more with thought of sorrow, tho his ears Rung with the warning and the solemn fears The Pastor of their households told the Sires. For when that he had heard the strange desires And thoughts of Eric, half spoke, dreamily, Won from his lips moving reluctantly; As with its secret burden moves the sea In mystic words half hushed upon the sand And half withheld the knowledge of the land.— Learned in old legends he perceived or dreamed That he knew all, for men of old time seemed To have written thus: that Life is twi-fold, twain Only till lives become as one again: And that at times these lives are brought to touch Each other here and mingle; and twixt such Is strange communion, fellowship, interchange, As soul and soul casts off the clay to range Together; yea that very soul and soul Could meet and wander on from pole to pole Leaving the cold clay tenantless; but that Were this so they would short grow one, whereat Strange wonder struck him in that thought for he Saw only death in this grand unity Of severed souls, and fearing for his young Lord And his dear Lady, he had sent abroad

By his advice the one to travel far, And sent the other passing like a star From Court to Court, to drown this longing in New scenes and suitors and the whirling din Of common Earth. He bade their Parents hope That Time would change them, Time the strong to cope With all things but with Love. By his advice All had been done, no part or pains or price Spared the accomplishment, and the Parents drew Hope from the interval of change that threw Its shadows on the souls that were as one. The bolt was shot; the arrow spent and done; The mark was missed; for Eric day by day Grew closer to her altho far away, And she to him was as his life, the land Saw them together often hand in hand Till people cried "A miracle," for so They cry who know not: and the steady flow Of fact unfaceable made the Sires agree, Half hoping against hope, that they should see Their children's children rise babes prattling at their knee.

They gave consent, and now the time drew near And both made homewards; on a morning clear Nerva saw once again her Father's halls, The fairy dells of youth, the waterfalls, And all dear places, there was but one gone, O joy she thought, he would return anon! Meanwhile thro all the wideness of their land Passed the glad news, and upon either hand, On sea and shore, and thro the hundred isles

That caught the Sun's last Westward sinking smiles The sounds of preparation grew, increased, For dainty joy and ruder revel and feast. And all men talked the Principality Merged in the two, and of all maidens she Most fair and stately; and the maidens talked His princely presence, how he graceful walked, His gentleness, his love; and each and all Blessed their young happiness and fair befall, Save only the old Priest who had to join Their hands and hearts in union. Nave and groin Entablature and architrave were fair With flowers and fruitage, he was standing there, Sudden two roses on the altar fell With broken petals, and an instant spell Drew him to look, down the nave carved and aisled A cold wind blew scattering the petals wild, Bore them away, was gone; and bleak and bare The spot was left where they were lying fair. Struck with new sorrow at the sight, again He sought their Parents, pleaded, prayed in vain. They were resolved: 'twere better once for aye To face the dread than to see day by day Their children's life in death: they deemed that all The terror that he told prognostical Might be mere terror and mistaken fear Of evils magnified: of union clear Unmixed of sorrow, drawn to sad event Not from itself, but from the thought that went Against it from the heart presaging woe: And they were right: they prayed, they trusted so:

The thing must be: and sorrowful he said • "I see no sight but those two roses dead," And sad departed to his place once more To con his mystic volumes o'er and o'er And seek in vain for hope. But all abroad Upon the land the summer smile of God Lay like a blessing; and the reapers sang Glad at the harvest; and the woodlands rang With many voices as the children played Or gathered beechnuts in the wild wood shade; And on the uplands and the higher hills The thirsty cattle drank the sleepy rills That slipped down seaward thro the stones moss clad, And in its royal robes of green the land was glad. But Eric came not and the days wore on And summer mellow'd over almost gone, When to her Father Nerva sudden cried Joyful as one watch-weary, who has spied The hoped for beacon. "He is coming now But far away as yet, the vessel's prow Is homeward turned, the winds at last released From bondage now are blowing from the east. He comes." Then the sight passed away He comes. And cold and lifeless for a while she lay, Then rose and gazed around and took her lute And played low to herself. And he was mute And moveless for her singing, but her lips Sung silently, and some strange speech eclipse Held the words in her breast; till thence she goes To wander in her well-loved woods. The rose And lily were all ablow to meet her there,

She like a spirit drinking in new air And fresh from Heaven stood, and seemed to hear The distant voice and straining cordage near; "He comes at last" she cried Near, and more near. "And now our spirits will be satisfied With oneness:" from a trance she seemed to wake And passed on joyous thro the tangled brake, Like a bright sunbeam slipping thro the trees Towards the silver shingles o'er the leas Down to the shore, and thence thro every spot They loved in childhood and had ne'er forgot. Till twilight gray closed up the far away And she passed swift to where his palace lay Her Father's present Home; and both rejoicing His sire and hers, heard her sweet song come voicing The evening vales to wood-wild melody, A young bird for her mate that passionately Sent forth her heart in song, and as she drew To them together there, each hardly knew The dreamy maiden of the past, so great So grand she seemed, so full of future fate. A few days more and so it was contrived A messenger told Eric was arrived And eve would bring him thither, and that night Amid a blaze of torches shining bright And people jubilant that did evince Their joy tumultuous, home returned the Prince. Their meeting who can tell it? Sire and Child, And Love to Lover. Bright the morning smiled After the meeting, when neath the castle wall They moved to greet the People who did call

Down blessing on them: happy were the pair And happy the glad folk that hailed them there. But there was yet a day more longed for still, Their souls went forth to it, and all their will Worked to that moment, when the blessing done They should be no more twain but ever one. Three nights would bring it. Now the Seneschal With all his guests had work to do withal, And thro the little Hamlet 'twas the same, Each lowly roof sheltered a lofty name. For far and near thro all that country's side The chief of beauty, rank and power and pride, All who were friends and all who were allied Were bidden guests, and men from foreign shores, And stately Dames, and smooth Ambassadors, Came too: and all the poor who wished to be Part in the dole that would be dealt out free After a union such of state and high degree. The last night came: Eric and Nerva stood Neath the still stars within the old oak wood They loved as children; thro all they had loved, Children again, and happy still, they moved Nor spake their happiness. Too fair to last The future seemed, yet never shadow cast Its lance across their thoughts or on the view. But ever at their hearts a longing drew Their whole being to the morrow: all this life Seemed centred in that morrow. Every strife Was stilled before it. Each hour brought increase As to a fore-cast of eternal peace. Some dreamless joy was ever drawing near,

When they no longer should be of this here, But of the beyond, that other, that all in all, That more than single being, that oneness, call It what you will, that ever, that deity That all souls strive for, that no longer we But one deep undefinable mystery, The great type of the changeless aye to be. It drew more near: each grand and starry orb Seemed in the Heavens some other to absorb Till in one vast light all was merged and that Moved burning up to where the Eternal sat.

The morning came, the sun shone glorious
Piercing the windows of the holy House
Of pious prayer and people's heartfelt praise
With gold and azure from the glittering glaze
Of lead-lined casements; here the bright beams shone
Over the holy face of sweet St. John,
And there upon the Archangel's falchion flames
And on the triple terrors of St. James,
Cast on the altar in rich tracery
Soft as the rainbow colours on the sea.

Now downward moving from the castle towers Thick as the corn and gorgeous as the flowers, Free-man and noble came, and filled the space Before the table, and all the broad place Fronting the chapel filled. A living aisle Of faces formed up to the holy pile Save entrance free to all who nearest stood In kin or friendship or in common blood To the two races. Round the altar ranged Rank after rank, the eye grew tired and changed

From face to face but ever as it past Lit upon some more noble than the last, Some higher beauty; now the train drew near And from without the shouts rose high and clear. "Long live Prince Eric and his gentle Bride, Long live the line so lustriously allied, May children's children rise and bless the knot here tied." The chapel reached they entered, and more fair Seemed Eric and Nerva than the fairest there. Never before so stately had he stept. Never before so queenly had she swept Upon her path, the lily of her dress Made yet more beautiful her loveliness, As the sweet strains of music rose to bless Their union. Now before the altar stood The two, and still as the sea's solitude But for its undersound the crowd was still. By Eric stood her Father, so her will Had ordered, and by her his own, and now The music ceased; and he whose holy vow Made them his children also loved, drew near And in the simple sentences each year Makes dearer to the world, he spake and said "Till death do part." But verily for the dead Is parting more than for the quick? And then The music yearned out softly, ceased; agen He lifted up his hands to bless them one. Yea one for ever: but he scarce had done, When crying out in bitter agony "'Tis so, O Heaven, alas and woe is me!" He stretched his arms to save. A shuddering start

A parting of the life blood from the heart
Fell on the Fathers as they stood, for there
A sudden paleness lit on the young pair.
Each looked upon the other standing by
A moment; uttering a lute-low cry,
As Heaven lay wide before them and increased,
They sprang together like two spirits released
From some cold prison, ne'er to part again,
And glad for future joy from present pain,
The new-wed souls grown one from that dear day
Fell in each other's arms and passed away!

LUNA LOQUITUR.

My rays fell bright upon her brow
I see her now:
And tho I was tired with my night long ride
I stayed me to look at a morrow's Bride.

My soft light shot between the leaves
Upon the eaves,
And on her upturned face and bosom
And silvered her wreath of orange blossom.

Her hands were clasped above her breast In perfect rest, She seemed to stoop out into the night Like an angel from the gates of light.

One would think young Love never had
A morrow's Bride more glad,
But I, poor Moon, who above her rolled
Knew well that her heart had been bought and sold.

L'Envoi.

I don't know whether you Mortals spy
Things as do I,
But the thought came o'er me as on I bore
Well I'm glad I'm only the Moon, no more!

ARIEL.

Swift as the silver arrows go From dewy Dian's cloud strung bow She sped her course from out my sight, The sun played o'er her pinions bright, And vanishing beneath the trees Her harp-like voice flung back these mellow notes.-"It is not that I love to sing As singers sing who sell their throats: Why is there music in the breeze? Why keeps the stream its murmuring? It is not that I love to wring Applause from nature's listening trees: The songs I sing no critic quotes, They bring no gain, no praise they bring. 'Tis only for myself I sing. The wind that pipes thro corn and oats, The stream that ripples in the breeze, Makes for itself sweet murmuring. Tree only sings to fellow trees, To Poets' souls the music floats By gray stone wall and ruined moats, For them and for myself I sing Thro love of tender melodies."

A SISTER'S BIRTHDAY.

Sweet Sister, tho some thousand miles Of sea divide us, you are here; The Indian Ocean wafts your smiles And every breeze proclaims you near.

The thousand little nameless things
Remembered scarce ere we did part
Now rise and fly as tho with wings
And come and nestle in my heart.

In kindly word and thoughtful deed,
The forecast of a future fair,—
In dark blue depths of eyes, I read
What purity has written there.

Joyous with all when joy is nigh
Burning for all that are distressed,
A white cloud in a stormy sky,
In blessing others thou art blessed.

And rightly did thy happy star

Cause this lot on thy birth to fall,

Full many daughters virtuous are

But thou, my Sweet, excell'st them all!

SONG: ROSES.

THE Palm is fair with feathery leaves
The Aloe fair to see;
But the Rose, the Rose, the English Rose,
The red red Rose for me.

When last I saw my English Love
She stood by thee, O Rose;
She laid her red lips on your lips
And whispered: "No one knows."

She breathed it in your ruddy lips

To keep the secret there;

Bid by the Sun you breathed it out

To all the scented air.

I breathed it in the air around
"Ah Love," said I, "I know
Your secret now, you lingered last
Near where the roses blow.—

Love, tell it with your English lips
To the Roses where you be,
And their Southern sisters here will tell
The secret back to me."

OMAR KHAYYAM.

The sight of thee my Love begets
In me such wild desire
That I am torn with fierce regrets
And burnt as tho with fire,
With beauty drunk and fond delight
My senses reel before thy sight.

O not the power of starry skies
Has sense to sway my soul like thee;
A very font of Paradise
Is thy sweet mouth, that opes on me
To pour forth floods of song, the whence
I drink and sigh their fragrance

O Bulbul on the mulberry spray,
Or filling the lentana leaves
With melody at peep of day
And when the jealous sunshine grieves
The darkness unto love and me,
Ah Love, the sweetest hours that be!

Thy songs are silent now, thy mouth
Is filled with kisses not with song,
The warm wind laden from the South
We drink as some narcotic strong:
Oh extacy to feel thee by,
I faint, I fail, I dream, I die!

A BIRTHDAY.

HERE no leaves wither with the withered year
That goes where all must go, to that dread shore
Whence years return not, leaving me in fear
And making for the land of never more.
Another year, another year has passed,
Veiled in his mantle wove of sorrowful things
Seer-like around about him cast,
And as he swept along
O'er me he shed the shadow of his wings
In thoughts too sad for song.

And swift behind him trooping fantasies,
Done deeds, and dreams companioning his death,
Swept straught as shadows some pale prophet sees
Gazing heart-held scarce daring to draw breath
From his lone mountain height upon the clouds
That take strange shape before his tortured eyes
Of dead men's graves and shrouds,
So saw I the past year slide swift by me
Bound weary for that land where nothing dies
Or dies eternally.

But ere he went for ever from my sight

Thought with his finger touched him, and he stayed
And crying "Why delayest thou my flight?

Thou that wast part of mine, leave me" he said;
"For I am dead and cold and joyless now

My days are gone as go the days of all."

With that he set his hand upon my brow

"Farewell," he cried, "parting I have thy tears,
Beware lest on thy naked soul should fall

The shadow of thy years.

I stand before thee weary now and worn
With burden of days that were and things long past,
Many have lived and died since I was born
Yea, many have found among my days their last:
And thine will come in one that follows me,
Even as I go so all men must go,
As every river runs into the sea
So for some far sea we must ever tend,
Hasting along with strong but silent flow
To the unending end.

Farewell!"—thereat his winged train arose
From where they crouched in silence round his feet,
Pale pleading eyes, troubles, and toils and woes,
Dreams of delight, delights themselves less sweet,
All now but empty phantoms sad and frail
Grasped vainly for a moment in the past
And flying broken-hearted, tho no wail
Burst from their lips that seemed to say to me,
"We are your thoughts, you well may look aghast
Is this the all you be?"

They turned them from me sadly and then raised
Their hands in farewell, and ere I could gain
A heart to question vanished; there amazed
I stood and round me lay the silent plain.
But soon the silence woke in happy song
As winds make music thro the corn in ear,
A chorus o'er the earth blew far along
Increasing like a river from its source
Hailing the birthday of the new-born year
It gathered joy and force.

FAREWELL.

ADIEU, adieu, and yet once more adieu,
With all thy bitter sweet depart old year:
What keeps thee lingering here?
The past must die, but you
Will never like the past return again,
But become as a wave of that ever increasing main.

Depart, depart, thine hours are weak and few.

The flowers are strewn and ready stands thy bier,
The time is drawing near.

Thy death, thy death is true,
Dreamless eternal, thou but a single grain
Of sand on that vast level boundless plain.

AFTER THE BATTLE.

HE lay on his pallet I lay on mine Watching the motes in the bright sunshine, While the Hospital aids passed down the line, And gave us in turns a drink of wine.

Then I thought of my mother far away
Where the mowers were mowing that midsummer
day,
And a little cottage that bosomed lay
Between two hills in a sandy bay.

And I thought of my boyhood when fir trees sung Over my head when my heart was young, Of the swing where together so oft we swung Of a sweet girl form and a silver tongue.—

He thought of the place where he was born Rich in the autumn with ruddy corn, And a blue sky line by the green trees torn . . . But swift from his sight was the picture borne. And he thought of a youth of sin and strife; Of a ruined manhood and blasted life; Of a broken heart and an injured wife; Till the thoughts went thro him like a knife.—

He—he had only a ball in the thigh. As for me—I o'er mastered a bitter sigh, And the dim tears rose and filled my eye, When the Surgeon told me I must die.

Perhaps it is better—she had but one— He was the widow's only son— And he yet may mend what he has undone. —The Surgeon said that it had begun—

Mortification set in I'm told;
That is why I feel so cold;
And my thoughts seem ages on ages old.—
Who is it has bought the life I've sold?

So he will recover, return, but I Must beside that battered battery lie.— God, I am young, it is hard to die! Water, my lips are parched and dry!

I am going fast, I can feel each fall
Of my heart on my ribs. Hist! I hear a call
But not to bayonet and trench and ball.
I'm coming Captain, I'm coming!—that's all.

AMERICA.

O BRAVEST branch grown stately tree And deeper rooted than the sea, We stretch a kindred hand to thee.

O Nation sprung from our own loins! And as our hand stretched right hand joins We feel that nature only coins

From one same mould the Saxon race, The time or climate may efface The outward seeming for a space.

The gold she fashions is the same

Tho stamped with different date and name,

A common mine the metals claim.

O never may the thought of peace Be broke between us, but increase Until our peoples seem to cease

From double being. We will reach Round the whole world in union each Grown one by bond of Saxon speech!

LEFT TO THE LAST.

The rifle balls had ceased to sing
As night drew down her pitying wing
To hide the bloody plain,
And on the ground myself I fling
To snatch a moment of sweet sleep
Before the dawn brought death again.

We'd conquered: those that starkly lay
Around us shew'd the bitter pay
We'd given for victory,
And many a heart from that sad day
Thro all the broad breadth of our land
Was wrung with agony.

A hand upon my shoulder laid,—
There's five of us, the sixth I made;
On Antietæm's stricken field
Among the cold still dead we prayed
To Him who gave and took their lives,
To guard us yet and shield.

At Fredricksburgh the surgeons tell
One his death wound, another fell
At Chancellorsville, and other two
At Gettysburgh in the charge, and well
The fifth there lingered a few hours,
And I was stricken thro and thro.

And tho given up by human skill

I lived, there must be something still

I am not but may be:—

Go read the workings of the will

That took the five and left the one

What need had he of me?

CHAUNT ROYAL.

As one that listens on some mountain height
For far off singing heard ere dawn of day
Long time I listened, but the silent flight
Of Ages brought no answer: as I lay
Drowsed and dreamful tho in wild unrest
The Spirit of all Time my heart addressed,
Staying his car as he was passing by
And gazing on me piteous piteously
He stooped him down, and touched me, and sweet sleep
Sealed both my eyes from present misery:
Ah slumber sound and sweet indeed as deep!

Conscious I was alone of pure delight
And music softer than the winds at play
Ere daylight dies away in dewy night,
And thro the dark the fall of soft salt spray,
Like that which melodies the further West
Around the shores and islands of the Blest,
Fell on my ear: ah sweet it was to lie
As once again beneath a mother's eye,
Cradled by winds hushed by their gentle sweep,—
Hear the low sea waves to the shores reply:—
Ah slumber sound and sweet indeed as deep!

O trooping Forms and Memories bedight With all that is of loveliness, O stay, Rest thee awhile that I may feed my sight On a full past tho not forgotten May!—Phantoms of the eternal, Beings blessed By death with freedom from the earth's bequest Of sin and sorrow, look on me pityingly, Pity and comfort! Such a one as I Can never combat all the ills that creep Legioned upon me. O were this my cry: Ah slumber sound and sweet indeed as deep!

O splendid Spirits of the morning, white
In spotless purity, who stand alway
By Him whose brightness maketh dark the light,
On thee I call, to thee, to thee I pray:
You who are inexpressible expressed
Only in that I feel a perfect rest
And peacefulness when you are hovering nigh
Working with some sweet souled ministry,
Ever in your pure care my spirit keep.
If such be sleep 'tis sleep sent from on high:
Ah slumber sound and sweet indeed as deep!

Ah sorrowful but sweet this earthly plight,
The soul cries ever out "Away, away
I have no home here," and a stronger might
Than that that keeps me earthly, seems to say
"Oh tired bird fly homeward to thy nest
Where One stands welcoming with open breast

And ready hands in greeting stretched to thee, From sorrow and from sin to set thee free; No more shalt thou have cause to sigh and weep In the calm gardens of Eternity:"

Ah slumber sound and sweet indeed as deep!

O that the now were passed, the when and why Of all things known, we must wait patiently: Wondrous the harvest that our soul will reap—Yet who can tell if dying be to die? Ah slumber sound and sweet indeed as deep!

BALLADE

FAR away in a world of wonder
In a wonderful world I found my Sweet,
The skies above us were blue, and under
The wonderful seas were blue at our feet:
O what a world for Lovers to greet,
O what a spot where Love might be,
Full of the sweetest of sweet and fleet
Blue as the skies are and deep as the sea!

Along the shore was the low heard thunder
Of passionate seas that broke and beat
Against the rocks that kept them asunder,
Held them apart that they should not meet,
Drove them back in a wild defeat:—
Ah Love, ah Love, how you looked on me,
Your dear eyes, full of a calm complete,
Blue as the skies are and deep as the sea!

The noonday stilled in the sound that stunned her Drowsy and drowned in the midsummer heat, Waited the evening breeze to refund her With health and strength on the sun's retreat;

Away to the westward pleat on pleat

The soft clouds hung there, where visibly
Love's eyes smiled down on his favourite seat
Blue as the skies are and deep as the sea!

Envoi.

We lay looking over the wind-blown wheat In a wonderful dream of the great to be, And the sapphire Future's soundless sheet Blue as the skies are and deep as the sea!

RONDEL.

How is it you and I Are always meeting so? I see you passing by, Whichever way I go.

I cannot say I know,
The spell that draws us nigh.
How is it you and I
Are always meeting so?

Still thoughts to thoughts reply And whispers ebb and flow, I say it with a sigh But half confessed and low, How is it you and I Are always meeting so?

BALLADE.

Love thou art sweet in the spring time of sowing
Bitter in reaping and salt as the seas,
Lovely and soft when the young buds are growing
Harsh when the fruitage is ripe on the trees:
Yet who that hath plucked him thy blossom ere flees
Who that hath drunk of thy sweetness can part,
Tho he find when thy chalice is drained to the lees
Ashes and dust in the place of a heart?

'Tis myself that I curse at, the wild thoughts flowing Against myself built up of the breeze
Like mountainous waves to my own o'erthrowing
Strike and I tremble, my shivering knees
Sink thro the quicksands that round them freeze,
From their treacherous hold I am loth to start:
In my breast laid bare, had you only the keys,
Ashes and dust in the place of a heart.

The world wide over young hearts are glowing
With high held hopes we believed with ease,
And have them still, but the saddest knowing
Is the knowledge of how by slow degrees

They slip from our side like a swarm of bees Bearing their sweetness away, and depart Leaving their stings in our bosom, with these Ashes and dust in the place of a heart.

Envoi.

Love, free on the uplands, the lawns, and leas;
Priced and sold in the World's base mart:
But the same in the end tho at first it please;
Ashes and dust in the place of a heart.

RONDEAU.

A coward still: I've longed to fling
My arms about you, and to bring
My beating heart so near to thine
That it might learn all thought of mine
And closer to me cling.

But ere I dared do anything
My trembling courage took to wing
And left its bold design,
A coward still.

Poor heart: these words for ever ring,
Fair Dame wins not the faint fearing;
Tho secretly it may repine
The loss that would make life divine
Yet it must be content to sing,
A coward still.

BALLADE.

O THERE is more than life in life!
There's something hidden and designed
To make us, tho we meet the strife
With boldness, ever look behind
The mere effect of blows and wind
Of adverse shoutings. "Ha" they cry
"Have at you!" but they pause a space
And tremble with uncertaineye
Nor meet as foemen face to face.

The fields are red for war and rife
To reap the fighters and to bind
Together those who feed the knife
And fail and fall, and passions grind
Against each other; but the mind
Holds back the warriors lest they die,
They take a last look on the place
Advance,—then sink back with a sigh
Nor meet as foemen face to face.

What is it Being has got to wife,
A thing that is, but undefined!
Out to the fight with drum and fife
The soldier marches, but entwined
His willing neck her fingers find
And hold him back. His looks are high,
He steps forth, cries, "Away disgrace:"—
But sooth from bruising blows they fly
Nor meet as foemen face to face.

Envoi.

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Ho, soft a moment let us try—
Tho gone the time and tune for grace,
If * * on the grass in peace they lie
Nor meet as foemen face to face.

CHAUNT ROYAL.

Strong as the sunlight, graceful as the vine
They shed their lustre on the earth of yore,
Man bowed him down before them as divine
Now they are perished as the foam ashore:
Burnt up before thy face they died away
As the darkness withers from the light of day,
A low wind swept the earth and shook the trees
To music, and the leafy murmur of the breeze
Sung "He is striving who alone can save,
They have slept and slumbered they have lain at ease:
Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!"

Their suns were bright along the low sea line
In the shades of early earth they lived before,
Now they are broken and the creepers twine
Round the ruined shrine and temple door:
Are ye mute, ye voices, have ye nought to say,
Rings no more the laughter as ye play?
The oracles are dumb the Godhead flees,
In his signs but woe the prophet sees.—
Freedom from his fetters to the slave!
Banishing their godstained cruelties,
Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

Ye were delicate of old your feasts were fine
Silken soft the garments that ye wore,
Here ye were drenched and drunk with blood as wine
There ye were softer than soft slumbers, or
The soft waves of the waters of the bay.
Darkling in the forest gloom for aye,
Or leaping with light love upon the leas
With tossed hair bared bosoms wanton knees,
Brave in that day when there was none to brave
Now ye are smitten from your palaces.

Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

As ye shone of old again to shine
Will ye rise again by stream and shore,
To reconquer all the kingdoms that were thine
To recover all that once ye ruled o'er:
Will ye tread with glowing feet the olden way,
To the elder shrines again will pilgrims stray.—
Aye but ye are strong, an it should please
You to rise in wrath from sleep and seize
What was thine, your onset who could stave
That ye should not wring on us your vengeance as the lees?

Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

Ever must ye slumber pale and pine
Listening to the years that rush and roar,
Dumb as beasts for death or herded kine
Struck silent by their never never more.
Never thro your darkness shoots a ray
As the clay has fallen lies the clay,

Doth it know or knows it never agonies,
Dreams that hold the heart and haunt the centuries?
Not by helm or hawberk spear or glave,
Not by rites that fright and fire the blood or freeze;
Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

Neath the skies of deepest hyaline
She is wailing for her Love slain by the boar.—
Her sorrows for her Love they now resign,
A deeper sorrow stirs than that which tore
The white thigh of her Love upon that May:—
She has fallen to the ground, she rises: nay
She will rise not: and the thought by slow degrees
Finds from their heart a sad release.
Lady, hear thy servants as they crave
But a voice, but a word of thy decrees:—
Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

O most mighty, thou who could'st consign
Fate or fortune, joy or agony at core,
Senseless neath thy bolts we lay as swine
Fearful of thy greatness high and hoar:
Father once we called thee, whose pay
Was passion pain and pitiless delay;
Who set sorrow for our manhood up that drees
Bitter weird of bitter sensibilities:
Round thy altar long we clung and clave,
Praise thee Father, praise for grain of glad increase.—
Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

From the mountain's rough and rugged spine
To the valley dewy dank and frore
Hunted, hopeless, reeling neath his tyne,
Listening, gasping, struggling forward, for
From rock to lower rock rings down the bay
Of the hounds that follow, and the Huntress holds
him fey—

Wherefore sudden stilled, what strange decease, What hath cut you off, what swift disease?—
Down from pale peaked point to solid nave
White fire cleaves the craggy terraces.

Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

Hearken O Celestial and incline
Thine ear unto thy children's songs that soar,
Help us, O our Father, that repine,
As of old thy Spirit on us pour;
We are fainting we are falling in the fray,
We are gathered to destruction as the hay
In our summer we are falling, once the keys
Of all knowledge and thine own infinities
Thou didst grant us from the sacred sources of thy
cave,

Now we are scorned we have drunk indignities.

Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

Thou art high and haughty of design
Thou art not for love and lusting, nor
Those compelling passions that confine
Hearts that fain would rise and souls that would
explore:

Thou art not of those that smite and slay,
Shouldst thou not have stood when others broken lay,
Know'st thou O eternal mutabilities!
Round thy spear and loric creepers sprout and squeeze,
Who is he that broke thee, who is he that drave?
Thou wert not as they of vanities.

Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

Forward: thou wert valiant to define
Battle with thy lance; made drunk with gore
Thou hast trod upon their necks that lay supine.
Thou wert heavy on the nations bitter sore,
Thou hast frowned upon the fair fields smiling gay
Thou hast torn them as a tiger tears his prey
Thou art surely never now for peace,
Against the yoke thy high soul mutinies:

Surely they that tell thy valour rave
Singing as the silly summer bees.

Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

Would you know them, would you claim them, call them, mine,

Mine indeed, yea mine by whom I swore,
Those to whom my life I did assign
On whose strength alone I set my store!
Call upon them loudly they grow deaf and gray
That they cannot hear their children pray,
They are fettered, they have never fate that frees,

They are broken the old principalities,
They are songless as the silent seas that lave
Their silent shores, and stilled their mysteries.

Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

Ye have been a token and a sign
Now broken on your broken temple floor;
Would ye break the breakers of the brine?
Would ye war against the very God of war?
Ye are ground as one with mortar stone may bray,
Yea flayed of glory as a flesher flesh may flay;
Would ye turn his anger and his wrath appease,
What may win his favour among your delicacies?
Vainly have they striven they that strave,
Thou who alone art of eternities

Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

Envoi.

Prince of all peace and power, thy enemies
Are now thy footstool, so be all of these;
And thy bright banner of love doth o'er us wave,
More deep than thought and stronger than the seas.
Lord thou hast conquered by thy cross and grave!

BALLADE.

My dream;—it hath called thee back to men's knowing,
Thou who knewst men best of all the line
Of the wonderful Dames of old time; thy glowing
Bosom that rises a billow divine,
Eyes like the sea-blue, a mouth like wine,
When was a deadlier wine than this,
Where sea more cruel than heart of thine,
Daughter of Asshur, Semeramis?

Come; thou hast fed on the fruits of thy sowing,
Love was thy labour and death its design,
In the long latter years that have past thee been flowing
What the conclusion of all: didst thou pine
For the Lovers that laid out a life at thy shrine,
For thy wars and the arrows that hurtle, the hiss
Of hot blood on bright blades and the spear points
that shine,
Daughter of Asshur, Semeramis?

Ninus; the king grown God! The blowing
Of winds thro a palace is delicate, fine,
Yet they fanned up a ruder report to growing
That spread neath Assyria's hyaline;—
Then there were Priests that must needs combine,
People and Priest—a shade on thy bliss—
But who could thy soaring soul confine
Daughter of Asshur, Semeramis?

Envoi.

Lady, a many I do opine

Fell for thy pleasure, yet now I wis
Both drink a common and bitter brine,
Daughter of Asshur, Semeramis!

VILLANELLE.

As things are will they ever be?

Ah who can tell there is no knowing:
They will not change for you and me!

Ab Love can you no change foresee

From skies that late were bright and glowing:
As things are will they ever be?

Summer has passed with footstep free And winter wan is chilly snowing: They will not change for you and me!

The petals that were bright to see
Withered the breeze blown paths are strowing:
As things are will they ever be?

The winds late kissed asleep the sea

They now in furious gales are blowing:
They will not change for you and me!

An acorn drops upon the lea
And soon it is an oak tree growing:
As things are will they ever be?

We cannot read; Time holds the key
His everlasting movements showing:
They will not change for you and me!

Hath Love, hath Love eternity
When every-thing to change is flowing?
As things are will they ever be?
They will not change for you and me!

BALLADE.

Our life is as the life of some great sea
Whose waves are ever changing as it flows
And ebbs forever by fixed laws, but free
To mould its billows to every breeze that blows:
As it slips back the hard black rocks disclose
A world below of pinnacle and spire,
Where scarce seen neath the shelly seaweed shows
The half accomplishment of vague desire.

We have the thought in common, all who be
Of common mould, in common each one glows
As he is led out from himself to see
That vague but true that daily fainter grows;
His soul springs forth led where the sunset throws
Its silver on the sea maids' songful choir,
And to the music that he drinks in owes
The half accomplishment of vague desire.

It quivers thro the summers languidly,
It fills the depths of soft white fallen snows,
And has a place and presence with you and me
Steeping our spirits in a soft repose,
When in the silence sinks to sleep the rose
And for the arms of night the hours gin tire,
It breathes in each light breeze that past us goes
The half accomplishment of vague desire.

Envoi.

Children: we feel it in the dead day's close
And as the shades of night come creeping
nigher,

The inexpressible all nature knows

The half accomplishment of vague desire.

RONDEAU.

VICTOR LESCAR: I like you, why—
Perhaps because a common tie
Binds both of us to some one dear
Whose bent is dark beside our clear,
At times almost light levity.

A common ground twixt us doth lie,
A Piers apiece have you and I
To groan life's gloom into our ear,
Victor Lescar.

We're ready for the faintest sigh:
God knows we've thought o'er bitterly:
But then we look beyond the here
And see a something sweeping near;
It cries out to us laugh and try,
Victor Lescar!

BALLADE

My soul is sick to death and sorrowful
A shadow rises with it ever showing
How vain it rises: forest fall and pool
And shady ways and caverns dark and cool
And morning skies and evening sunsets glowing
Teach me their sorrow, I cry bitterly
Yet what are all my woes of mortal knowing
Beside the ceaseless sorrow of the sea?

O Earth and what art thou but one great school
For sorrow, in our childhood we are stowing
Joy think you, joy; we go round plucking wool
From off the hedgerows that are bountiful
To give what they tore off from others, strowing
The way for us to gather misery;
But what all grief we gain in grain or sowing
Beside the ceaseless sorrow of the sea?

"And who is merry," saith he, "but the fool
Unto his foolishness his laughter owing,
Teach him with rods, 'tis vain, no rods can rule;
Content beside some fire he keeps his stool,
'I'm warm within out there it may be snowing,
Be merry heart, what hurts it you and me?'
His feet make mockery of the sad sands going
Beside the ceaseless sorrow of the sea."

Envoi.

Man, thou art deep of thought and ever growing
In knowledge, and with thy thought grows grief
in thee;

But what thy grief tho it were overflowing Beside the ceaseless sorrow of the sea?

RONDEL.

O WHENCE to sleep the thoughts That are not sure of sleep, When waking thought supports The strange surmise and deep:

When day to night retorts
"I too can secrets keep:"
O whence to sleep the thoughts
That are not sure of sleep:

To what vague wondrous ports
Do souls thro dreamland sweep,
What islands and what courts
What shores and silver steep?
O whence to sleep the thoughts
That are not sure of sleep?

BALLADE.

I LAY by the soft salt sedges
To list to the song of the sea
As she broke on the barren ledges
That barrier Orkadie,
Far Isles yet dear to me;
And I heard in her waves that were flinging
Themselves down furiously,
Forever surging and swinging
The song of eternity.

Out there where the rude rock wedges
Its rough arm sturdily
Into the main, and edges
The breakers that smite it and flee
With foam, that to ebony
And iron cliffs is clinging
Like wool by its storm scared knee,
I marked thro the spray's salt stinging
The song of eternity.

Here where her giant sledges
Thrash the shore thundrously,
Till she drags down the sand and dredges
It back from the depths set free,
And surging passionately,
To the bay's bare bosom bringing
Again the spoils that she
Bore off, I can tell upwinging
The song of eternity.

Envoi.

Soul hast thou marked her singing?
Altho of the earth she be,
Herself hath a soul like thee,
From her lips she is ever ringing
The song of eternity.

CHAUNT ROYAL.

WITH spread hands before thee kneel I now uplifted By the tender smile that shineth from thee down, Thro thy mantle overlaced with stars and rifted With the flashes quivering from thine opal crown:— Drinking from thy breast, upon thy bosom nursed, Late I lay and slumbered, now thy light hath burst Full on me. O thou by whom all things are growing: Thou from whom the past and present are o'erflowing: Hear me Nature, Goddess, hear me, tho they smother Thought that thou hast planted not of earthly sowing. Mother, I beseech thee, hear me, blue-eyed Mother!

By thy bounteous presence is the woodland gifted With a sense of worship stealing up to drown Baser thought in slumber that thy soul hath sifted From all lower longings: lying on thy gown Golden green and broidered fresh as when it first Left the loom creative, as a child who durst Call when others dared not, I have cried thee, going Sad of sin and self to thy still shrine, owing All solace in sorrow to thee and no other:

By thy soft caresses in the free winds blowing,
Mother, I beseech thee, hear me, blue-eyed Mother!

Over high set highlands craggy crowned and clifted Looking far across the teeming plain and town I have passed in wonder, I have seen thee shifted, Yet unchanging, all pervading, in thy smile and frown: Smile of spring and sweeter fuller summer erst Yet with winter storm and darker sorrows cursed: Plentiful and glad mid kine and cattle lowing, Mid the happy folk at harvest work and mowing, Twas thy gracious influence filled them, not another: Thou who smilest in winter twixt the spells of snowing, Mother, I beseech thee, hear me, blue-eyed Mother!

Hopeless for a haven have I drifted
Thro a surging surf, as one that in a swoun
Sailing sees the tall cliffs pass him, crannied, caved and
crifted

By the fretful waves, and hung with seaweed brown Waving him away; but raging thirst Drives him to the land and come the worst He can only die and cease this weary rowing; One more stroke, a crash, a still, he wakes, fain would I as glowing

Sense and spirit lately sundered leap together, Gone the dismal drag of being, the weary towing. Mother, I beseech thee, hear me, blue-eyed Mother!

Starry ceiled and azure vaulted, by the blue seas skifted, In thy chamber carpeted with green o'ergrown, Kneeling low in worship may my prayers be lifted By the winds to cling like children round thy throne. Once in all thy secrets I was versed, Cold the current chill where I am now immersed:

Pulses that once bounded at a thought of thee are slowing,

High hopes held that were life's cruel winter winds are strowing,

Frozen in the frost of common day they wither, Keep me, guard me, aid me, all-embracing all-bestowing; Mother, I beseech thee, hear me, blue-eyed Mother!

Presence all-eternal, Spirit overthrowing Bond and bar the pathway to His portal showing, Than a Sister sweeter stronger than a Brother Thou of love that passeth thought or mortal knowing, Mother, I beseech thee, hear me, blue-eyed Mother!

BETTER.

BETTER to sleep and slumber on the sea,

The great sea's bosom, than to feel your hands
Held to your sides, and to know bitterly
You sink in cold quicksands:
Better to welter on the waning wave
Tossed here and there in death, than to be free
To crawl the sea-shore and the shelving lands
Thro life a living grave.

Better to sink down sorrowful and cry
"Thou who art more than me receive my soul,"
Fain would I rise, and if I cannot, die,
And hear the waters roll
Over my spirit till I cease to hear
The lipping river and the sad winds sigh,
And only dream that time is drawing near
And nearer to its goal.

Better to struggle up and fight and fall
And in the darkness see the light before,
And thro the fainting silence hear the call
The fray, the fray is o'er,

Thou art not victor but thy death is given
And freely it is taken, it was all,
It hath sufficed and thou may'st soar to Heaven
Thou couldst have spent no more.

Better to slip away and cease of breath,—
If thou rise not for thou art valueless.—
When the skies sleep and ocean slumbereth
On cape and cove and ness,
With nought to hear thee say thy last farewell
But he that standeth ready even Death,
Give him thy hand and he will guide thee well
Thro this thy last distress.

Better, 'twere better never to have been
Than to have added nought to what there is,
Better to have no eyes than to have seen
But never felt the bliss
And happiness, tho sad, of striving yet
To pass the impassable that smiles serene;
Live, eat, drink, revel, but forget, forget:—
O Life no more than this!

'TWIXT NIGHT AND LIGHT.

'Twixt night and light 'twixt morn and dawn there is
A time and silence weird and wonderful
In which strange thoughts and feelings come and go;
These answer to no thought in worlds like this,
But speak of regions dim, half-lighted, cool;
A space o'er which the waters ebb and flow
Betwixt the barren sea-shore and the sea,
Betwixt the salt sand and the barren sea.

The darkness whispers farewell to the day
And day strives hard but vain to answer back,
There is a bar between, they cannot meet
And hold sweet converse face to face and say
Brother to sister sweet good night, they lack
The power of uttering the greeting sweet:
Words cannot span the severing mystery,
The severing still the wordless mystery.

Dawn shot with red shouts out to greet the Morn
That rises glorious, but the cry dies still;
And the Morn yearning for the past cries "hail,"
But no voice cheers the sadly fleeting Dawn,

Neither have power tho each one hath the will To cross the valley of shade the twilight vale Dim and unknown, a very bridge of sighs, A scarce seen bridge of soft half-uttered sighs.

The thoughts that spring to kindred thoughts of earth
Have here no answer to them when they spring
From moments past and strive for sympathy,
They meet with feelings that have other birth,
That hold not common with them anything,
They look but speak not, nought 'twixt you and I.
Whose reign is this, whose principality
Whose reign scarce felt, pale principality.

Send your Soul out into the vague and call

To all the powers that be, "Receive my soul,

Let it dwell with you and instruct me more"—

Then let it soar or let it downwards fall;

It comes back weary from a gainless goal,

Weary from winging down a desolate shore,

Betwixt the barren sea-shore and the sea

Betwixt the salt sand and the barren sea!

MINISTERING SPIRITS.

OFT at dear dawn and dewy eve Ere sunshine builds the earliest sheave Or gathers up the last of light, They answer to our heartfelt prayers And fly to our dull land from theirs And greeting bring or soft good night, Like those who trod the golden stairs Before the Patriarch's sight.

They are not of us yet of us,
Their being is so marvellous
Beings of a purer sphere,
We know their gentle ministerings
By the soft flutter of their wings
And feel that they are near,
And love their gentle whisperings
Half hushed into our ear.

We cannot see them, yet unseen They are not, for they rise between Ourselves and what we see, And tho no hand is on us laid A hand is grasping ours to aid Us upwards, and to free Our souls from every sickly shade That haunts us where we be.

Their powers we know not, ah but still We feel them tho invisible And graspless as the air!
I know, but care not if I know
How the bright sunbeams come and go So long as they are there,
Who aye light everyone below
With same and equal care.

Thought spreads his wings and rises high An eagle thro the conquered sky And gazes on the sun, And sailing thro the azure deeps In steady circles onward sweeps Looks down on every one. Then sunk upon his erie sleeps And dreams new flights begun.

But in the loftiest sweep of dream
The mountains tremble to his scream
He wakes and gazes round,
And plumes his mighty wings for flight
Across the bar of dying night
To where the day is found,
But tho before him all is bright
He shivers to the sound.

Beating the air with maddened wings He shoots aloft from earthly things, Thro space to rise and run, Yet cannot make the nearest star
That shines serenely and afar
Altho he pass the sun;
Tho thought pass all things here that are
There yet is more unwon.

Mind maddened on doth ever sweep To check before a further deep The which it cannot cross, Before it stretches out the track There is a magnet holds it back And there it still doth toss, Powerless to penetrate the black Thro some eternal loss.

But tho the mind may eagle be
There is a more than mind in me
And greater than the mind,
The loftiest sweep of bravest brain
Is sickened by the surging main
Which round it, it doth find,
Like a tired bird it sinks again
Borne down of adverse wind.

And is this all? No, something creeps Upon us when the tired brain sleeps Like the day's afterglow, It lulls life's strange and bitter smart And plucks the arrows from our heart And curbs and checks the flow Of the wild thoughts that ever dart At us their shafts of woe.

Ah moments sped! the happy hours Were like a coronal of flowers Of liquid lucid light, And grief and sorrow were in vain For every flower healed up a pain, Alas for days o'er bright; The magic of the past again Swims off and all is night!

WHY SO?

It was not he was over bad
Or lower than his fellow men;
But once more rose the thought he had
That bade him live his life agen

And put off much the which he bore
About him in his daily walk:
"Pshaw!" he said and laughed and swore
But it was vain for him to talk.

"Yes, I daresay we're very base
And care for nought but birth or bread."
But straight a simple little face
Gave back the lie to what he said.

And then once more as he had seen
He saw the wonder of her eyes,
And marvelled how his mind serene
Should tremble at her soft replies.

He felt superior in that hour Patted his lofty intellect,— Then blushed abashed, it had no power Her simple faith that could affect.

He wondered at her pity pure
With pained and yet half pleased chagrin,
Felt thought's foundations late secure
Shake as to some strange spell within.

There was no slightest touch of scorn In all those gentle words of her, From his high seat he was out-borne And bent and bow'd a worshipper.

He could not give his feelings name
They were so vague and undefined,
And trembled when the evening came
To every whisper of the wind.

This formless passion that had spent Itself at random, went far more To frame his hopes and high intent Than all the teaching gone before;

A single look, a sigh, a touch,

The footfall of this woodland elf,

Had made him strive and ponder much

And led him higher from himself.

THE SECRET.

Look up look ever on the spheres
That wheel above, and not on earth;
Look forward to the coming years
Not back to those that date from birth:
Fear not if the present a sorrow supplies,
Step out bravely and brush back the mist from your eyes,
See the good to arise.

And if you needs must turn and cast
Your longing thoughts on things before,
Think on the joys that you have past
Before you made this earthly shore:
It will come to you straight, if you seek it, the voice,
It will say you have won, you have made the true
choice
And bid you rejoice.

And that's the secret that is all

That makes us laugh take heart and try,
When others earthwards groaning fall

And where they have failed and fallen lie:
Let the roadway be dirty or foul in this place,
Just catch the smile of the stars on your face
Upturned to God's grace.

A BIOGRAPHY.

A LYRIC Singer, and his songs were such They pierced the hearts of all who heard his songs, Till many passing listed for a while; But when a note of deeper import fell Upon their ears, they turned away and cried "Lo we will hear thee of this matter again. We have no sorrow, all the world is bright, The past has no return; sadness indwells The heart and mind, 'tis individual And breeds and feeds itself; the world is pleasure And we must drink of it while yet it is; The rest—we care not of it: cease." They passed And others came and for a moment heard But soon resumed reply identical. He sung in vain his songs were not of them, Not of to-day.—He changed his silver strings And made a lower music not his own, Till in the struggle snapt his new strung lyre: He cast it from him and was dumb: awhile Pent in his soul he kept the river back, But on a day a sudden burst of song Swept from his lips when like the dying swan Borne on the arms of gentle melody From life to death, he left this land of ours And passed to where all Singers' songs are still.—

-No sound I made, upon the silent snow My footsteps fell as silent, thro the trees I saw the cones and crosses, obelisks And slabs of marble, mute and motionless, And shining in the light that mocked the sun With silver splendour, and shades more dark than day Gives to his shadows; thro the wicket gate I passed nor sought a storied tomb, but took My way into a far recess the hill Had made out-curving; by a lifeless tree Here mid dead docks and stinging nettles rose A gloomy mound that stained the unsullied white About it. Nought said sanctuary beneath A stricken life had found from all earth's ills, No hope was writ above to stay despair, No thought of future home and meeting place, Nought but the clodded clay that there and here Still kept the shovel's smoothness and the print Of feet that stamped it closer. Long I stood Musing the past till suddenly I stooped And with my finger traced a tiny cross Above the mould, but as in bitter mock Of the poor thought of hope the blasted tree Splitting the wan light of the winter moon Fell like the shadow of a skeleton Across the grave, and the sad snows that spread Their white web like a winding sheet far o'er The plain spoke only of decease and death.—

A dull cloud hid the moon and all was dark, Till looking forth despairing past the walls I saw one starbeam twinkle on the sea.—

"SUNT ALIQUID MANES."

Prop. Eleg.

I saw her lying marble there Upon her couch. In my despair All thought of other thought was fled I only felt that she was dead.

I see her lying marble now
Above her tomb; her beauteous brow
And cheek the sunshine warms with red—
I know her now no longer dead.

LIFE AND DEATH.

Life and Death, incidents peculiar to the being of all things create, are ever the same yet ever rich and varied in their arrival and issue. Some would seem to live and die as swine, some as Stoics, others again pass thro and leave this life as angels might slip from one sphere to another at the call of the All-wise. Be this as it may, Life would seem to be a middle space of rest or labour between two unknowns. We are, we work or idle on awhile, and again we are not. Nearer than this we cannot get. Our only certainty is that Death will bring us something more than the present can give, and be a new experience.

That released Spirits are permitted to return and hold fellowship with Beings yet on this mortal earth I personally have no doubt. There are times and circumstances that draw us together, our communion is permitted. I see in it nothing contrary to the expressed will and ordering of Infinite Love.—

This it may be said is Spiritualism, that degrading amusement of vacant minds—Heaven help us, no!

That the Deity, whose tender pity for poor Man in pain or sorrow stilled the waves and raised the widow's only Son, should at times for some wise purpose of His own allow the return of the blessed Dead to earth upon some mission of love has been the belief of the good and great for ages—a belief shared in by the very writers of Holy Writ.

But if necromancy with tables, pencils, Planchettes, Mediums, media, et hoc genus omne, has anything in common with this belief but a misapplied name, all I can say is I am very sorry for myself and for a considerable portion of the World.—

LIFE AND DEATH.

NAY, not forsaken! only for a while
We see no more the loved that used to smile
All love upon us. Yes, I hold it true
That there are moments when our mortal view,
Blinded by earth and earthly things, grows clear,
And we hold fellowship with those once dear
Now dead and gone men say, no ever hovering near!

Not as some deem with terror and with dread Is all communion with the happy dead:
Who fears an infant in its slumbers sweet,—
They have returned to their first infancy
And there are moments that permit us see
Their blissful state, a space for friends to meet
In holiest interchange, where we may greet
Our gone before and learn the great to be.

Dust unto dust, we give them, and Death claims His due, we grant it, who can fight with Death? Who is but one of myriad other names For the great change that ever works! one saith "The shadow of Life darkens the fair beyond;" Another cries "A man may well despond When Death makes dark the daylight of our life.' Death is a slumber and a cease of strife Our peace our consummation; who shall sing His tender grace his gentle ministering, O great restorer, thou eternity Of all things that are changeless only in thee!

As we died into life, so are we born
By that new birthright back to cloudless day
We left for a few nights unstarlit here;
The mists roll off, from hem to high hem torn
The curtain is thrown back, and now more clear
We read the secret that hath been alway
And see the dark burst forth in golden dawn!

Death shines upon us brightly; tender eyed Of delicate hand and form are those that Death S ends here to visit us all purified From taint of Earth, altho preserving still The warmth of life the gentle boon of breath, Thoughout responsive as they once replied Showing to all Death hath no power to kill.

My heart flew back across the seas that rolled Between us yet, that long had rolled between, And as the slow years passed had never borne From him a single message that had told All that my soul desired to know. What scene Now held him habitant, and what had been To him of life in those tired months outworn With weary watching. To myself I said,

And half in fear to say it neath my breath,

O Brother heart from me so bitter torn

Art thou of toilers still for daily bread

Or filled forever from the rich stores of Death?

Then all the past swam up before my sight.
Our meeting first: the tender intercourse
That broadened like a river gathering force
As it rolled down the valley of our young years;
The each one for the other that we felt
As every dawn shed forth a clearer light
Over the union of two hearts that knelt
Before the shrine of knowledge; and all fears
Were cast beneath the fearless feet of youth,
Happy in its own strength, and fellowship
Of Brother heart and hand and earnest lip
Fresh from the fountain of young thought, and eye
That looked out bluely without shade of ruth
Or saddening stain of manhood's sophistry.

I seemed to slip out of myself and grow
Once more into the Past; the pearly morn
Of boyhood when we started hand in hand
To track the glades and leap the overflow
Of the fair fountains, where the golden sand
Caught our glad footsteps, and the budding thorn
Was musical with birds that seemed to fling
Their very hearts out to the air in song,
Borne upon their own melody along
Singing because they could not help to sing.

Life was not always summer; each to each Grew dearer for the common bond of grief, And often did our sorrows deepest teach The full of Friendship; we drew nearer to Each other when the veil that ever lies Twixt soul and soul was torn apart for brief Swift moments, and the spirit came streaming thro To teach us not to weary all alone, But to lift up her heavy-lidded eyes And find how heart to heart had closer grown.

Back, back, went memory following up our years Until that black day that said "Ye must part," And this world took us far from each and cast The naked sword of separation tween The barren Present and the Golden Past, And said "Of all the sad things that have been Too sad for sorrow measureless of tears Ye have it here—heart held apart from heart." Therefrom our lives rose up between us twain; First self deception, promises again Made but again to be outworn and die That we should see each other; long years fly And day to day succeeds a dreary train, For after all this waiting you and I Have only learned that waiting is in vain.

I turned and answered to my Friend that said "All is not vain" O happy flying feet
Of circling Time that brings you back to me,

And hand in hand we stood there. I—and he Who looked on me the king-like as of old, And with the same sweet smile, the kingly head, Cried "To good purpose have the summers rolled Away that bring us here again to-night To stand once more in one and other's sight."

Together then we flew back thro the Past: All stood in order, that, and this, and this, Until our parting when we interchanged Things that from then had been, and happy cast Into the lap of present converse all That had been for our sorrow or our bliss. And full of hope thro all the future I ranged A future in which we two should never part, And then he answered reading from my heart. "Yea so we will part never, we will know That partings are not partings "-Sweetly flew The evening hours away; and from below Came up the sound of happy song, and thro The window, all the spicy odours blown From the earth's bosom after a day of rain. Outside the night was dark and swarming stars Set out the skies like sapphires, a white cloud Lay like a girdle o'er the zenith thrown Mixed with the mild light of the Milky-way And past Orion and the mellow Wain Melting into the black in silver bars Beyond the Pleiads, where their sisters crowd The southern constellations. O'er my soul A sense of sudden almost fearing came,

And broke in on the happy hours that passed
And with a sudden cry I called his name.
And all the pent-up font of love, a whole
Wild river rose up to my heart, "At last"
I cried, "I see thee, have thee!" "Peace," he said;
And stood up on his feet and raised his hand
It seemed in farewell, and his lips and eyes
Spoke all his love. "I leave for a far land,
But leave thee love and peace!" As colour dies
From out the golden Southern sunset skies
He vanished, and I knew my Friend was dead!

(Fragment.)

FRAGMENT.

Here the dull roll of thunder still goes on
For hours and hours,

While overhead the Heaven its mail draws on
And shielded round with sullen storm cloud lowers
And grumbles down upon the earth, that cowers,

As cowered the trembling Lords of Ascalon
And Gath and Gaza, when their gathered powers

Saw the twin pillars from their tottering throne

Give to blind Samson's grasp, bend, break, and thunder
down!

GRIEF AND JOY.

THE heart the heart must ever seek relief From the wild pangs of life it strives to shift From itself on to its surroundings, we Would vainly pierce thro every cloudy rift For answer to what lies within us; brief We feed its fierceness and on every plea Fuel the furnace of our agony. Wear the red rose of sorrow: we all must wear The rose but not from off the self-same tree, Bear it breast high but in all purity Let all men see a white rose shining there. Think not because our woe comes up between Ourselves and Nature, fields are no more green, Skies no more blue, and fountains no more fair, And all things marred by our own misery. Nay: clasp we our cross till to a higher grief Chastening earth's sorrows in our hearts we lift The shadow from Life's sadness: bitterly Altho we travail for this holy gift 'Tis worth the working; noble the belief And true as noble, there is joy to be Beyond the silent shore beyond the sorowful sea, Forever in the calm gardens of Eternity!

THRO ALL THAT IS.

I HAVE no heart for men who live and lead Their souls blindfold about within, whose creed Makes their flesh four cold clayey walls and hides The sunlight out from the sown seed that bides Within: 'tis planted in all things the fruit Makes but the difference betwixt us and brute. For all things that are His have of Him here Some more, some less, but unto me 'tis clear That nothing is that hath not in some part Some of the Father in its inner heart And deeper seeming. Mountain range like this Is it not garment as man's body is Of that one commonness between all things Both animate and inanimate, that brings Us more to oneness? What, these streams and seas Have they not soul within as we have? these Dead lifeless nothings only? as for man he Has in Creation's vast infinity A small small portion of the Spirit of God Pervading all, from molehill-mottled sod To mightiest mountain mounded plain: and sure It needs this cloak, or we could not endure The streaming forth of the full glory thence, So veiling in the world its radiance

Lest our poor vision it might all confound It casts creation like a mantle round And glows thro all this universe of ours. O more than blind, the meanest thing that cowers Would draw infection from his tainted breath. Who, very forecome of a baleful death, Says all is dark and fain would shed a shade Upon the light of nature: who has laid His shadow on the sun! And whose the light? Nature were darker than the dreariest night Stood she alone, but almost with surprise A more than the soft splendour of her eyes We oft see shining from her face, and hence If we bow down to that magnificence Worshipping what with Him is most endued, Do we not worship Him who is all good Who blessed and made all things, and filled full up And now holds to our lips the running cup Of word, soul, substance, essence, what you will That works and is and ever shifts but still Is all eternal? As dews downward fall It are descends, and Spirit is in all. I see it, feel it, know it, blown around Is the soft presence of His Spirit found; His Spirit reaches down, but yet so far Is God, so high and we so lowly are, We feel our very prayers the earnest given Flag weary winged and scarce can make their Heaven!

GOD'S MYSTERY.

Lo I am all that is hath been and that yet shall be, No man hath lifted my veil and none can my countenance see:

I cry in the thunder and seas, in the changing seasons rejoice,

But I am what I am, hast thou seen Him or only felt His voice?

"Where is thy God?" thou criest. O man in thy wisdom reply,

Where is the soul within thee and I answer where am I. Infinite Spirit and thought man has by his words confessed;

Yet God is a lie of man, earth well thou marvellest.

Hast thou a soul O earth? yea, and from sand and sod

From seas and from rushing rivers comes thundering or whispering God!

Aye, thou hast not forgotten the day that I made thee fair,

Fashioned thy form unchanging that thou mightest this witness bear.

To man was thought and knowledge the power to weigh and poise

All things in the balance of mind, and now that power destroys

The finger that holds the balance; till he profess to see That the scales are held by nothing but themselves have power to be.

The beam will give good answer, the yard will weigh out well.

But where is the hand that holds it ye weighers if ye can tell?

Man is master and handles the weights, but if it seem
That the last are true and earnest is the first but a dread
and a dream?

Ye are men ye know it your life is a little span,

But the thoughts that overflow it do they die in the death of man?

What is the infinite spirit, a vapour a mist a breath,

A touch from the things around us, and the token and triumph of Death,

Or is it Death defeated or hurled from the world away,

Or is Life stilled for ever in the arms of the corpse and clay?

Had I given you thought for labour and written the higher within

Only to see you struggle and vainly weary to win,

I were the Fiend you make me: too black for the deepest Hell

Had I made man only to suffer beneath me, that I might dwell

In a dream of delight on his agonies hopes and hopelessness,

To drink in blood like water and batten on each distress; Type of eternal tyranny wrong and awful fate, Spit on His face and die, O earth, if thy God be of such estate!—

Yet such as this ye have made me, O children of my desire,

Born of yearning love and longing to me your Sire.

My Maker if I speak boldly 'tis Thou that allowest my speech:—

But the riddle is hard to read; how is it that unto each The same swift power is wanting, those terrible words are writ

That some who would see shall be blinded and their ears shall hear no whit,

That a cloud shall hide thy Presence, that thy Life shall be cold and dim,

That for Christ they shall cry to creation and it shall be silent of Him!

It is not for want of longing, the whole earth sighs for a God

From the grand Cathedral's music to the insect's chirp from the sod;

It is not for want of longing and agony pangs and prayer That men are broke by the surf of doubt on the rocks of despair,

It is that their eyes are blinded and they see him not standing there. I have known I have known them crying for Death or a God to come,

But the cold clear Heavens were silent and the stars in their place were dumb.

And I, O God that I say it, when never another could see,

Away beyond and above us the Ancient of Days on me Looked down as upon a child with tender Father-like eyes,

As he looked upon the thief and murmured Paradise Thro the agony of the Cross: but His voice fell not on

their ears
And their eyes saw never His nearness thro the

blinding mist of their tears,
So they turned and cried "There is never a God to answer

Our cry

You create Him in thought and see Him: we are human

You create Him in thought and see Him: we are human both you and I,

And one and the same created by the hands of an Infinite Love,

How is it He scorns us in silence and answers you from above?"

I know not, I cannot say it, I cannot answer and tell:—Some flowers are born in the forest and some on the upland swell,

Some in the shadowy glooms see never the sun's grand face,

And some are fed and fostered and glad in his glory and grace.

A mighty mystery around us, there is sure reason but we Our eyes cannot behold it, it hath been and shall ever be. One is allotted labour and health and wealth thro his days

But his presence is cold and crushing he hath never a voice for praise:

Another is racked with anguish and bound to a couch of living death

But her presence makes Paradise of earth and her chamber is breathing of God's own breath.

The riddle were easier read were it only those who rejoice

That hear his voice and answer, but agony answers his voice.

As for me I see and hear Him; beneath, above, and below,

In the wood's grand voice as it passes and all the grasses that grow,

He is evident here and awful. I know Him and feel Him yet

He shines not as once He shone the sun of His presence is set

And evening gathers apace, tho the westward glow and the gold

Throws Him back to the last on woodland valley and wold.

Nature is sad and dreary and halts with weary feet, The life within her is fading slowly and sure not fleet

- And Death is drawing upon her, the cold and chill of his breath
- Is falling upon her children who cry that we die in her death.
- If the mother be left and lonely for a Spouse drawn further away
- Will the children cry out "Father," or will not the children say
- "We have no Father we wot of, we have never felt his hand,
- 'Tis little we have 'tis little but 'tis of ourselves we stand;
- And those that cry on a Maker but cry on an idle name," As it was will the world be ever, alas, it is not the same!
- The night hath brought down darkness, with her wings that sweep the skies
- Hiding the light from the longing of those that with watch-worn eyes
- Look for the morning to break, while the black of the night is curled
- A monstrous dread about them—and there yet is hope in the world!
- Hope! and what is Hope, if it be not trust in a greater to come,
- It must have food to feed on, or the voice that cried grows dumb,
- The sustainer fades out slowly; but there is food and a cry
- Half heard thro the straining turmoil and the ever agony

- Of the life that is: an instant sheds light on the upturned face
- And the longing fades in triumph, no more. The delicate grace
- Of the quivering starlight falls on hope made glad with a certainty,
- He steps back into the vast of Life which somehow is not what it used to be.—

TO THE MOTHER OF ALL

I can feel it fading, fading, passing swift away from me, To return no more for ever never more again to be, In the woodlands in the valleys that were not mere

In the woodlands in the valleys that were not mere valleys then

In the wheeling whirling swallows even in the sons of men.

There is something I am losing, yes, I feel we all must lose it;

Better lost than never felt tho, were the choice so we would choose it.

We have lost it; blindfold, baffled, for a while we here must linger

Walking not the World as children with a hand that clasped God's finger.

Fainter is our cry of anguish here His face a while averted

But we feel Christ's cry of agony from the cross when God-deserted.

"Father wilt Thou leave Thy children?" "I will never leave thee, rather

Will a mother leave her infant!" Whence this darkness rising Father?

- Rising up twixt me and all things; part no more of one and other.
- Once beside her feet I wandered, felt that Nature was my Mother,
- Now no more, a veiled Isis cold and haughty and repelling
- Standing in a gloomy cloister with a charmed ring round her dwelling.
- This I may not cross or enter, vainly by her name beseech her,
- She is silent still and speechless once my guiding star and teacher.—
- Blue-eyed Mother, Blue-eyed Mother, solemn, stately, starry-girdled,
- Is thy spirit flown for ever, in thy warm veins cold and curdled
- That full flood that filled my Being with the life I bear and rapture,
- When my spirit was thy loved thy latest born and earthly capture
- From the vast and wandering sphere of spirits seen but not created
- Into flesh and breath and birth-right, soul and body matched and mated!
- Mother, can I call thee Mother? that thou art I know and feel thee,
- Thou hast been and I am from thee yet I cry and none reveal thee.

Wherefore hast thou left thy children we are sad and very weary,

And the track is hard to follow and the way is dark and dreary!

Close the branches close above us as the sun sinks lower westward

And the Hornbill hurtles homeward and the Bell-bird flits by nestward,

Dark sweeps down we wander hopeless from one horror to another,

Send thy light once more to guide us, look once more upon us Mother!

Fire-fly gleams flit thro the tree-twigs faint deceptive transient tapers

Straught shapes in the distance forming, from the swamps the heavy vapours

Marshal all their chilling armies, summoned by the breeze that passes

Mournful bugle notes and eerie thro the ranks of elephant-grasses.

Doleful from the dumb-struck forest come the hideous cries of darkness,

Like a wake held round a warrior stretched out grim in silent starkness:

Gloomy is the sky above us, not a star for sign or cheering,

And an awful and unearthly something ever nearing nearing.

Closer closer creeps the midnight gainst our throats and chokes and strangles,

Creepers fetter us despairing, round our limbs they twine their tangles,

We are tied or struggle hopeless from one horror to another,

Send thy light once more to guide us, look once more upon us Mother!

SEMERAMIS.

And so Semeramis
You with a burning kiss
Devoted your strong Lovers unto Death,—
How say you now that I
Have called you from your sleep,
Your long long sleep:—you lie
Against the crimson background of the Past,
As lies a lotus in the glory cast
By the setting sun across the water line,
Its white breast heaving to the delicate breath
Of the sweet South laden with scents of eve.
Small wonder that men worshipped you divine,
Sense their sole witness you did not deceive!

There heavy-lidded yet you lie so deep,
So very long have your still slumbers been;
But raise thee up my Queen!—
See the bright blood flush and faint tremors creep
Thro the soft limbs—a shudder slight—they shine
Full out those twin orbs of deep hyaline.
What, wakened? Yes.—And now that smile serene
Of conscious power. You look again on man
But no Assyrian
To dream his life out on thy milk-white doves!—

Thy doves that were for so sang all thy Loves O amorous pair, That fed thy young life in the Desert there And settled on thy breast grew part of thee! Nay thou art very fair My Lady Queen! now lifted up by me The veil of Death hath let you back to life.— Thou wert a faithful wife! So the old king found when he left this strife Translated to the skies. For what king ever dies, And you mourned for him: - tales were very rife. So all the Past swims back :-Once more the morning streaming from the East Over those low blue hills lying far away, That take the golden light of the young day To tip their purple; and the endless track Losing itself where buried man and beast Mile out the weary desert; that one spring Green always like an emerald set upon The earth's forefinger;—set up to the sun— That long low ridge of sand, which like a ring The palm trees seem to circle: on and on Thro your first years; until that later one When full of girlish summers your fierce blood Flushing your cheeks flashed on the warrior's mail And all the sons of Asshur shouted, "Hail," And not one there but would have freely stood Betwixt thee and the arrow and given his soul To reap another moment for thine own.

-Then strange confusion of wild thoughts, a whole

Unbridled river madly overflown,
Its waters bloody with the spume of fight,
Grim wounds and battle terrible of sight.—
Then stillness and a little stifled cry,
Heart held and stifled, and wise witchery
Winging to wicked ends.

Once more a change of scene—
Again the mailed and bearded warriors round,
Circles of chariots and bows and spears,
And then a shout that to the stars ascends
That strikes the seas and shakes the solid ground
And thrills or threatens thro a million ears,
"See sons of Asshur and behold your Queen!"

A change once more: the time is trouble-eyed Full of fierce longings all unsatisfied.
You stretch your arms upon your queenly couch And press them to your bosom passionate, not cares Of State, nor all that meddling Priests avouch Could force that gesture: the convulsive kiss Meeting the empty air; hunger like this Could not be filled, and so they fell; for they Were sense not soul and never could fill up The aching void that sought your other self;—
The vase was there and there the crystal cup But ere you drank the fountain fled away,
Tossed shattered on the floor or on the shelf In hollow mock once more the goblet lay.

Again the spears and horses wild for war, And the dread dew of battle on the plain, And the dun dust that rose from moiling men,— Far off the vultures o'er the fallen soar Or feast upon the first-fruits of the fray,
The smitten rises up to smite agen
One last death-blow, ranks meet, and then,—and then,—
The tide of battle breaks and bears away.

Blue over all but swarming o'er with stars, Cold pitiless stars, that look in silence down But yet more sad than scornful for the sight.—Beneath the wail of warriors seeking one Queen ever, not from mere accord of crown, But in her queenship of fierce hearts and jars. They found her not, tho weary from the fight They sought her till all hope of search was done Where round them lay the solemn space of night.

The dying hours are wearing faint and few, We must be parted by some thousand years My Lady Queen. What brought this me and you Together from your centuries of sleep And my short days of life? Adieu; Adieu; Return again, for present morning nears, Into the gone immeasurable Deep!

VIVIAN.

"Well my dear little Lady you have not taken long to get into your habit: part of one forenoon is not much to spend with your dressmaker, especially when you have had so many interruptions to your dressing"—

I was busily engaged when it sudden struck me to write a Vivian and then compare it, not in poetry, for that were folly and presumption, but in form and Legend with the Laureate's. The Dedication, Coming of Arthur, Geraint and Enid, and Guinevere being, I am ashamed to say, all I had ever hitherto read of the Idyls of the King. But I knew that Tennyson made his "Vivien" "a bad lot": worse than I thought now I come to read the tale. I considered this very hard upon an old Friend.

Viviana, Lady of the Lake, has always been one of my dearest and most fancied Fairies. My notions of her were in part taken from a prettily illustrated Book of my childhood which dealt in, "the history of the life and death of Sir Thomas Thumb, King Arthur's Knight," but chiefly from the storehouse of my own imaginings.

I was in love with Vivian at seven or eight years old, and have been so ever since. A boy in his heart is true his whole life long to his first mistress. Every Lake had then for me its Lady, and there is one lovely sheet of water out here which I can scarce yet pass without expecting to see the lilied Queen rising to greet her some time Boy-Lover. I suppose every one of us has loved some one older than himself,

every one of us had his Vivian. I believe so: and what power for good or ill has she had over us. But they are pure and high and holy these attachments and have an immense influence in the formation of future character.

Ladies, have your young days known no Arthur, or even no King of Faerie? Ah yes. That benevolent middle-aged gentleman, who is so kind to the elder Scamp and always has something in his coat-tails for the little golden-haired three year old, was he never more than he is now, a loved and reverenced friend? I think so. The time has long passed away, but there was a time when there never was true knight more adored by his own dear Dame than that sober silver-haired citizen by yourself. With what a torrent of tears you burst away when you heard of his betrothal; how you hated his poor innocent Bride: yet you sat upon her knee when she returned with him from their honeymoon and from that hour to this you have gone to her for comfort and consolation in your every distress. She was the first that heard when the real Arthur at last arrived; and hewas it not he that forced upon you that lovely "old English," that delicate "Point," and the little locket, that as I say it; buries its brilliants in your indignant bosom? Ah me, I begin to think we are very fickle, very fickle!

VIVIAN.

THE Master Merlin by strong magic drew
The Lady of the Lake, fair Vivian, forth
From her still world of waters where she lay.—

Full of dark depths like skies of Southern blue, And calm as silent stars of winter North, Slept her still shallows thro the summer day.

Betwixt the hills she saw the distant Forth Wind like a vein of sapphire thro the hills, And the long ridges of the rolling sea

Tossing for sleeplessness and not for wrath, And marked the tender green about the rills And silver streams and tarns her sovranty:

A low wind shook the reeds as twilight thrills The heart with evening's spices strangely blown From branch and blossom of myrrh and jessamine,

And with a sense of things not earthly kills All slumber in a dream of life outgrown From mortal ties and tendrils, that entwine To choke the holy seed by such hours sown. O hours that bring us nearer to the lost, O hours that give us to the past again,

Of perfect peace, when we no more alone By lonely doubts are troubled, torn and tossed, But learn that life knows not the word in vain!

Far down she marked the path the wizard crossed Upon his palfrey as the hills he sought To pain her with his hateful suit of Love,

To pour his passion on the bitter frost She had for all his mortal meanness wrought Swaying her with his power, for so he strove

By the enchantments some drear boon had bought To win her to him: thrice she cursed his power That had her from her waters at his will;

Fair child of purer elements, untaught Of the low forms of baser breed that lower In sullen mischief on the higher still.

Her birth was long ago in happy hour,— Sweet long ago, how many lives are these That we have lost in the dull world to-dayBorn of the Spirits of sun and summer shower, Cradled and fed by the young dews; the trees Sung lullabies above her as she lay

And listed the first whisper of the seas: Or on the water-lily floated down The streamlet to her palace in the mere;

Breathed her young spirit on the spicy breeze That shook snow flakes from the willow catkin crown, And blew her presence sweet to far and near.

She had her playmates in the balls of down Her swans deemed offspring, in the fish that fled In shoals or single thro the depths below,

And in the mimic armies, mimic town
Of bees and ants, and when the sunset red
Brought on the eve great moths with eyes that glow,

And when the day broke out and night was dead The flashing butterflies and birds of dawn; And dun deer from the hills that drank and stayed

Half diffident to greet her, as she would wed Her sea-shell hands around the timid fawn Clasping its neck; ah happy was the Maid,

Who grew to lovelier loveliness, each morn Crowned her more beautiful and fairer fair, A spotless sky with never clouds at strife, Pure flower upon its petal not yet torn By ruder later winds: the delicate air Breathed only sweetness on her budding life,

Among the hills set like a jewel rare, More lucid than the waters of the Lake, Loved of all haunting Spirits true and pure;

Unknowing evil till the taint of care Shook from her dream of happiness awake Her sharpened knowledge, so to shun the lure

That caused her many an hour of weary ache And fear at heart. For with his subtlety He sought to foul the silver of life's spring,

To bend the lily to his lips, to break
The wild rose for his wearing, carelessly
As some cloy shepherd plucks them wandering.—

One Summer's morn upon the mimic sea Her Lake of crystal blew its balmy breath Warm with the sun: disrobing lazily

She sported thro the waves in extacy; And by the streamlet, so the Legend saith, Weary with inexpressible joy did lie,

A lily cinctured marble, which kind Death Seemed not yet to have robed of life, and warm And breathing the embodied beauty lay,— And still as dewy twilight slumbereth On beds of Southern flowers, what time the charm Of silence falls upon the parting day,—

In dreams that reckoned not of any harm: Hands baby-pink one o'er one neath her head; Pink like the inner lining of the shell

Her feet lay on the sand, one in the calm Of lipping waves that kissed the delicate red And silver foot and strove with earnest will

To kiss the other higher drawn; the spread Of twisted gold that half a garment lay From her fair shoulders spreading down; the grass

Bowed o'er her body and the long blades were wed Above, the peeping sun to bar and stay That shot his light thro every shady pass.—

Fate driven no doubt it chanced upon that day The wizard Merlin crossed the stream and saw The lovely vision, and a sudden fire

Leaped thro his limbs, the late insensate clay Burned thro with passion; a restraining awe But scarce o'er mastered this wild new desire.

But more than Man, Magician, he forbore His purpose for sly sureness; by his art He filled the air with spells and straight withdrew. She started from her sleep, a something tore Her soul from slumber with a sudden start, And in her bosom burned more than she knew

Who bore about an agony at heart Unknowing of the seeds of evil sown, Of those cursed spells by the enchanter cast

Upon her, of their work, her innocent part In her own woe to be: her peace was flown, No more, no more, the sunlight of the past.—

Save scarce felt Presences she had not known Her like companions; one day from her halls She felt a summons. By the bank he stood,

One who was like her yet not of her own, Elder he seemed, and as the sunlight falls Cheering on all, his smile seemed all of good

Thawing her shyness as the winter balls Of snow are thawed by the warm breathing South. He took her hands and termed her his, she felt

No fear but sat there listening to the calls Of weeps and curlews, and in the long growth And green of grass she closer nestling knelt,

And heard soft words like music from his mouth Falling as rain on a dry land long delayed; So oft and daily grew their intercourse,

268 Vivian.

Until his absence seemed a very drouth
And his grand presence all earth to the maid.
Still other thoughts kept down and back would force

Themselves upon her: all things that he said Were hard to hearken, ever a sad sense Broke on the present and grew yet more strong

Till the thought rose, this new companion played For evil only on her innocence, To work her so deluded bitter wrong.

Upon one evening, from her Lake shore whence He late had parted, she passed down the stream And followed him afar off to the sea.

And sudden saw a fair Being rising thence To greet her Lover. Ah! it was no dream She saw it plainly, a reality.

Her heart was filled with anger: she did seem The Stranger like herself thoughtless of ill, And knowing not his baseness whom she loved,

And with the daylight's latest dying gleam
He parted from her. Vivian waited till
Up from the shore the cursed magician moved

Then met the other Fairy, who, until This bitter meeting having deemed all things true, Now told her fair sister of the magic charm That had the power to bind but not to kill. "Sweet Vivian all my trust is placed on you To wield this weapon and forefend our harm."

So passed the hours, till on the sleepy blue The Moon laid down her ladder tremulous, After sweet converse parted the fair queens

Of lakes and streams and seas; and thro and thro Burned Vivian to avenge the wrongs that thus The Mage had sought to work them, all the scenes

Of her sweet youth were darkened: so to us Wrong makes all dark when many days must be Betwixt the wrong and the sure vengeance thrust.

For the we strive with passion, stay and truss Goodness, forgiveness,—Pah, bank up the sea Or seek to quench thirst with a draught of dust!

Twas morn: the wizard came, his palfrey Let loose upon the herbage, by her side He sat and pressed his suit with words of love.

Such words men use when with love's eyes they see Before their random passion gratified, Makes them that which they seem not. "Aye above

Yon grazing steed you value not your Bride.
What is the charm we talked of yesterday?
You call me Love and keep it back, who soon

Will have no smallest secret I can hide From my dear Lord. No thought to keep away And yet you will not grant this little boon.

O all is folly that you mortals say! You have a charm to keep me ever thine, You will not let me prove my love and keep

My Lord not mine a moment, but alway Knit to my heart for ever doubly mine." Hereat she ceased and made as tho to weep.

Her large eyes filled with tears, the blue divine Shone thro them as blue heavens shine thro a mist Among the mountains, and he answered back.

"Sweet Vivian, who could feel thy fair arms twine About them, and thy fingers round the wrist Unmoved? and yet I cannot speak, alack!"

Staid speech awhile and her fair forehead kissed. "Dear child this knowledge meets not, it is vain And useless, worse than useless, ask no more;

Ask me for priceless worth of amethyst Or diamond or opal, and all gain, And all the prize of earth's most precious store,

Ask these, I grant them, ask not this again!"
He ceased: she nestled closer to his breast
Loathing herself that did it, and adept

At sorrow almost felt and real pain
She lay a moment still and sobbed at rest.
And closer yet a little nestling crept.

Then sighed "Ah heartless, gold and gauds are test Forsooth of love! is this the price? you hold My love worth gold and gauds, and you are man,

Nay, but some moving marble from the West Of dragon heart, an animated, cold But lifeless image: I had scarce began

To drink love's fulness when you offer gold,
O hard, hard, hard!" She ceased, her head drooped low
Upon his shoulder and he felt her breast

Flutter on his, heedless of warning old He felt her arms about his neck, the glow Of her warm heart by his, a wild unrest

Shook his fixed mind; he answered, "Nay not so I give not gold for love, but only bless
The altar with an offering that the gift

Be made more holy: I would strive to show My worship for my Love. My fault be this And I will seek to make amends and shift

What you deem insult from me." "Well I wis" She answered "that you will not tell the charm You fear me, I who ever feared you not

272 Vivian.

And wholly trusted. I have done amiss.

I am deceitful: full of fearful harm:

Loathly and hideous, soiled with many a spot.

You would be rid of me. Ah well!" a calm Seemed to come o'er her sorrow, she lay so still. He kissed her cheek and raised her up and cried

"Lo! I will tell thee all." Her nerveless arm Fell from his neck. "Too late" she cried until She slow swam back to sense, and wonder-eyed—

"Where am I?" said she "'tis the same old hill The same fair Lake beneath me, ah!" once more Closed her fair eyes "Cruel depart!" she said.—

But now more passionate had grown his will, And by her name he called her o'er and o'er, His Love, his Bride, now lying cold and dead,

Till she awoke. He stood upon the shore Of Fate: the words were spoken: every rule Of mystic meaning told her: one by one

The runes conned over, adding if she bore Her maiden mantle in the evening cool Thrice three times round him that the charm were done.

And ne'er henceforth as Yule-time followed Yule And year dull year, could he break forth and leave The prisoning mountains, till he pined and pined And grew a voice, no more. She murmured "Fool." Laughed inly in her heart, who could deceive This master but a woman's master mind?

And seeing that the wizard seemed to grieve The scaped secret, set herself to please And soothe suspicion from his brows: she set

Herself to sing and curious legends weave. And Merlin lay and listened: on her knees His great head lay, and like a coronet

Her fair hands crowned it. Murmurous dreams of bees Came from the heath, and from the tinkling rill Sweet silver bells that mingled with the song

Sung by the tuneful leafage of the trees: A Plover calling, and a Whip-poor-Will Moving away across the moorland long.

The wind upon the waters: summer still On lake and land: the great clouds lazily Drifting across the sky like floating down:

He closed his eyes awhile, then longer, till His senses sunk in slumber as the sigh Of evening heaved the heather pink and brown.

Then she arose and moving steadfastly

Spake the charmed words; thrice, thrice, her mantle waved,

And thrice she paced around the charmed ring.

Till all was done and rising gloriously Conscious of victory; she cried, "Saved! saved!" And sudden slipped off like a swift awing.

Envoi.

Princes or Peasants be ye wayfaring
And plaintive murmurs strike upon your ear
Like tales of woe forgotten heard again,

Be ye assured 'tis the leaves that ring With Merlin's murmuring ever haunting drear These ancient hills, to fill them with past plain,

And the still shores about this reedy mere
And all the glens and straths and valleys broad
That sigh of him who lives not nor is dead,

Give ye good heed unto my Legend here: Fraud ever is outshot by further fraud, And by deceit deceit is ever sped!

NOTHINGNESS.

- AFTER our toils and labours the result is it not too dear, Nothing to satisfy us at all, nothing to fill up the full of the vision,
- Nothing to tell us plainly, nothing to make it clear,
 - That life is life's own triumph and the fruits that follow its full fruition;
- Only some sorry days made sad with an aching eye and a longing ear.
- Rain in the time of rain, and spring in the time of spring,
 - Winds that blow us about, and heat in the full-grown strength of summer,
- A wild unsatisfied longing, a striving for each new thing, Only to find that the strife is vain, that the past once more is the longed new-comer,
- That change sweeps on in cycles with sullen changeless wing.
- Hope but the repetition of hopes that others have known,
 - Ever a rising up but never a thought that crests and crowns the summit;

We know that a statue lies concealed in the uncouth stone.

And music in the late perchance, we finger the cords and strum it,

Where is the harmony hidden? we strive: at a touch 'tis gone.

Up from hill to hill to catch the rising sun !-

The Bell-bird ceases, is silent, and the morning Thrush stops short in his singing,

Broke in the midst of his notes, tho his song is not half done

A still falls on the singer, and the silver rifted mist up winging

Shows terrace on terrace above you where you thought to crown but one.

Thence to the vale beneath us, to the green of the forest trees,

Down thro billowy brakes of cane and tangle of trembling grasses,

Into the open glades below, our goal the lowest of these, We are in what we deemed the valley only to see the lower passes

Limitless rising and falling away like waves of the stormy seas.

Effort is overwhelmed and whirled like a buffeted boat Over distant shadowy stretches of storm the fierce coast fleeing,



...

- And the only hope of the soul is that it may keep afloat Helpless of port or passage, supported alone by the innate instinct of Being
- Striving from habit and shifting and setting the sails by rote.
- Till life grows mere animation pulseless and passionless,
 A thing that is only not Death from the ever sense
 that it hath of despairing,
- And it looks back cold and careless as it slips past ness and ness
 - With never a pillar to mark the past or a beacon to guide its onward faring
- Chilled by the freezing spray it ceases to feel the strain and stress.
- Wearily ever onwards is the cry that comes from all, Onward, search and strive, press onward and upward tho ever weary;
- Struggle against the Fates and their hammers of thundering fall,
 - Travel the road that others have traversed along tho dull and dreary
- Starting around to hear the screams from the forest that call.
- Wondering why you travel thus why pilgrims have been, What is the end of the path, but ah and well it had need be a palace,

For the cruel desert that lies around since morn when we left the forest green,

And the shady paths and blooms and drooping bells and flowers of sun-kissed chalice

And the early slopes and spurs with glades and grass between.

After the middle passage when we sum up what we have past

Is there never a sickening sense of wasted toil, and that nought is improved or beholden

A title to all our labour, and that we have only cast Nothingness into the empty vessel of life accomplished and done? Afar the golden

Sunset shines on the sea, ah Man, wilt thou make it at last?

FINIS.

O NORTH wind blowing against my lips
Bear back my Song to the heart of the South,
Ere thought of another between us slips
Go lay my kisses upon her mouth.

For once in the time of long-ago

Ere the diamond morning of boyhood past,
While yet a child in the come and go

Of things, my arms round her neck I cast.

And she drew not my hands from that neck of hers She looked down tenderly with her eyes, And as the water in summer stirs Half-hiding its music, the softest of sighs

Broke from her bosom. "I take," she said,
"Dear child not mine the most of thy heart
That a stranger may, when the years are dead
That are nearing now, I will lead thee apart

From the midst of men to my innermost Fane
In my woods and valleys stand sponsor to thee,
And thy kisses I will restore again
In love from all nature that is of me."

<u>:-</u>

And she watched my steps thro my earlier years
Till that early year when I left her care,
And her fading shores with childish tears
For I felt I was leaving a Mother there.

My own cold Mother of Northern lands
Was far away from the land that I knew,
Thou heldst me not as now by the hands
Spirit of Scotland with eyes of blue!

Wonderful Spirit of field and flood,
Of heath and heather, a beauty thine own,
My heart is thine and of thee my blood
And all my duty is thine alone.

Forgive me, I set not the South above
Thyself nor my manhood for her employ;
"Tis a boyish love for his own first Love,
The wonder and worship of a Boy!

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